WONDER TALES OF THE WORLD

CONSTANCE ARMFIELD

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LOS ANGELES

To our dear Father and Mother

This wonder-book —

for Christmastime —

from their eternal children

Connie + Rose

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J3 .4

Cap O' Rushes Threw Back Her Cap and Cloak

Page 162

WONDER TALES OF THE WORLD

RETOLD BY
CONSTANCE ARMFIELD

ILLUSTRATIONS BY
MAXWELL ARMFIELD

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TO
THE FAMILY
PETER, OLIVER, AND PAMELA,
KENNETH AND BARBARA,
KATHARINE AND X.

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All the bridges are broken down,
Broken down, broken down,
Walls and bridges 'twixt town and town
All on a springtime morning.

And all the tales come racing forth,
Racing forth, racing forth,
East and West and South and North,
All on a midsummer morning.

Here we come gathering wondertales,
Wondertales, wondertales,
Korea, America, Persia, Wales,
All on an autumn morning.

What shall we do with our harvesting,
Harvesting, harvesting?
Bring it to the children's King,
All on a Christmas morning.

Whom shall we thank for our wonderbook,
Wonderbook, wonderbook?
All the authors from whom we took
These tales for a holiday morning.

Who are the authors, please to say,
Please to say, please to say?
Nobody knows, they are so far away
In the mist of the world's first morning.

But still their tales are bright and new,
Folktales new, folktales new,
As the world grows brighter, the tales grow too
In the sun of the world's new morning.

C. A.

California. June 17, 1920.

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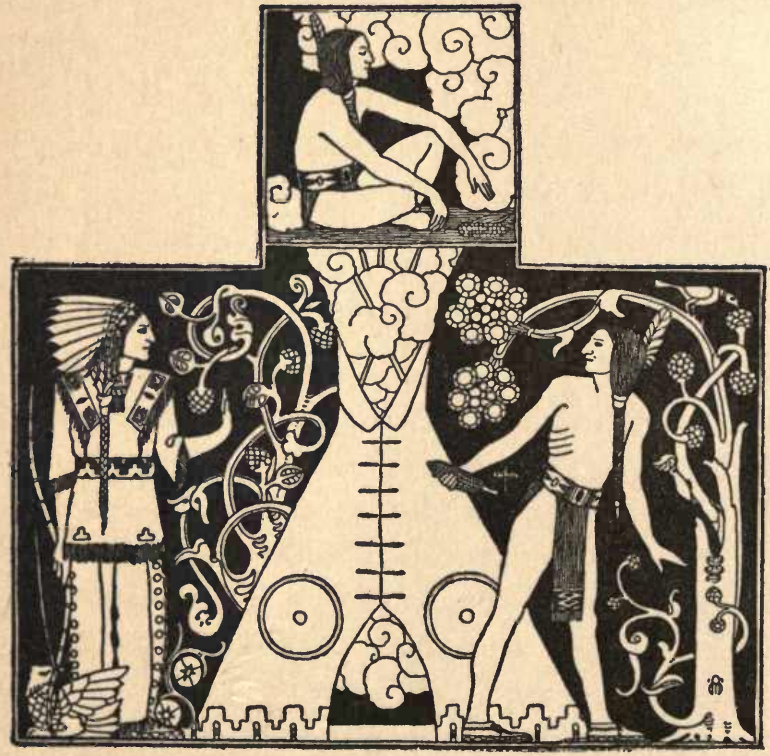
WONDER TALES OF THE WORLD



THE FOOD THAT BELONGED TO ALL

A Tale of America

ONCE upon a time there was a family that went by the name of Badger, because every one, from Grandmother to the smallest child, was as industrious as those diligent little creatures. They lived in a forest in America and belonged to the tribe of the Sioux. There were no cities in America then and the Americans were strong and handsome and sunburnt because they lived out-of-doors and made everything they needed for themselves. Everything they made, whether it was a birch-bark cradle or a buckskin shirt, was decorated with beautiful patterns and colours, just as the birds and flowers were decorated and adorned.

Even the buffalo-skin bags in which they kept the winter stock of provisions were painted in bright patterns, so that the shelves of their caves and their tepees were as gay as flower gardens in summer, and

all the children who ran in and out were as pretty as butterflies.

One day a stranger came to beg for a little food; he told a sad tale that his spring-planting had not been successful and his family was starving. Gladly the Badgers gave of their store, for the corn was high and loaded with fat ears; the pumpkins were golden and the beans were hanging in great clusters, every pod well-filled. When the stranger thanked them, the father Badger shook his head smiling and said: "Nay, my brother; thank the Great Spirit who has sent this plentiful supply; food belongs to all His children. Eat what you will."

They were surprised the next day, however, to see their guest return with a small child, his son, who carried a rough bag, unpainted and badly sewn together. The stranger now said his name was Bear and asked somewhat timidly if they could spare a little food for his children at home. His small boy looked so thin and hungry that the Badger children could not bring him enough and soon his frightened face began to smile and he and his father went off, lugging their bag loaded to the brim. The next day the Badger family went out to gather in the bean

harvest, but when they returned, singing thankful songs and rejoicing in the thought of the Great Father's kindness, whom should they see but Mr. Bear and five children seated round the entrance to their home. But there was so great a harvest that they were glad enough to share it with the Bears who went away with their arms full.

The Badgers noticed this evening, however, that already the visitors looked plumper and the father Bear no longer spoke in a humble, whining voice, but shouted to this one or that and picked over the food that was offered to be sure he only took the best.

When, next day, the Bear's wife arrived with seven children and a little sled to which a dog was harnessed, the grandmother Badger shook her wise old head, but the father and mother Badger would not say no, and they went out to the corn patch and laid beautiful green ears, tasselled with pale gold, upon the sled, and bade the Bears farewell and a good journey as if they were their kin.

But the next day Mr. Bear turned up again and so it went, each day the Bears appearing more and more

impudent and fat and strong as they waxed vigorous on the food the Badgers had provided. Now the grandmother demurred openly and even Mrs. Badger wondered that the Bears did not offer to render some small service in return for all this food, but Father Badger persisted that their part was but to give to their brothers who were in need, even as the Great Spirit gave to them. "Food belongs to all," said he, and that was the end of it.

Presently they noticed what a great interest the Bears took in the preparations for the winter; in fact, Mr. Bear was almost rude in the way he hectored and scolded and blustered, saying that their crops should have been gathered in long before this and the little Badger children should not be allowed to play at all or run in the forest looking for flowers whose juice dyed pretty colours.

"Get all the food together," cried Mr. Bear. "It is senseless to waste time on making things beautiful. A man cannot live on beauty; beauty does not fill his stomach. Let the children seek berries, and dry and store those if you like. I am partial to berries when my dinner is over and I cannot eat another morsel of tallow or pemmican. But all this

painting of bags and this trimming with beads and feathers is of no use to any one."

"He talks as if the place were his own," said Mrs. Badger when Bear had gone. "May we not make use of the hands and the eyes we have been given?"

But Father Badger continued his gentle kindness, and said gravely when the women rebelled: "Let us do our part, even as the Great Spirit does His. Our brothers must be fed."

But one day, when the little Badgers ran to their mother for some honey which she had just found in a hollow tree, Mr. Bear actually knocked them to one side, and snatched the honey from their mother's hand, crying that honey was his favourite food, and marched off with the comb.

Even now, though the grandmother warned him that the Bears were becoming ungovernable in their greed, Father Badger persisted that it was more blessed to give than to keep for one's self and that food belonged to all.

Soon after, when the harvest was gathered and stored, the Badgers went out for a great tramp through the woods, even Grandmother coming to

enjoy and marvel at the beautiful colours of the leaves reflected in the river. When they returned, what was their surprise to see smoke rising from their home, and, running up, they found all the Bear family cosily settled. They drove the Badgers from the door with shouts of laughter and the Badgers were far too few in number to turn them out.

The Bears had waxed strong on the Badgers' food and now they had taken the Badgers' home with all their supply of provisions for the winter. There was not so much as a pumpkin or a bean left in the fields nor a berry in the forest.

So the poor Badgers were forced to make themselves a shelter from boughs and stuff the twigs with leaves and moss.

In the morning Father Badger rose up and to his family's surprise told them he was going to the Bears to beg for some food for his family.

"What? You would ask them for what is really ours?" cried his wife.

"Food belongs to all," answered Father Badger. "It will be good for us to learn that we have nothing of our own. If kindness and pity move the heart of

our brother to give us some of the store he has seized, we may know that the Great Spirit is speaking through him and that some day he will be taught gratitude and justice. I must ask, for there is no longer any food in the forest."

So Father Badger went to the door of his home, where the Bears were quarrelling and shouting and tearing open the beautiful bags of food, spoiling the pretty patterns and scattering everything wastefully upon the floor. But give a morsel to the Badgers, they would not. Instead, they shouted rude words at him, calling him a weak and wretched beggar, and mocking at his plight. One would think the Badgers' home and food had always belonged to them, from the haughty airs they put on when they saw the Badger, standing meekly and patiently, asking for a little food on which he and his children might keep life together. It was plain that the Bears had quite forgotten that the Badgers had ever owned the cave. They seemed to think themselves very splendid people for having accepted the Badgers' kindness until they were strong enough to turn them out. And they had nothing but contempt for the people who had been so generous to them.

The father Badger returned home at last, saying to himself: "Food is for all," and feeling sure that the Great Spirit would somehow provide food for them. He had not been home long, (if one might call home the shelter of leaves and boughs that they had put together) when a fat little face peeped in, and lo and behold! who should have followed him but the little Bear who had come with his father the second time? He had not forgotten his little playfellows and had brought them some of his own dinner.

That was not very much, but it was something and though day after day the father Badger went to the Bears and humbly asked for food, and day after day the Bears mocked at him and sent him away with nothing, yet the little Bear always stole off and carried a few fragments to them.

It did seem, however, as if the Badgers had been turned out of their beautiful home forever and the children grew thinner and thinner and huddled round the little fire in the tepee, too weak to play, while the grandmother and the mother whispered together, thinking over the past and wishing they had never been kind to the Bears.

But Father Badger continued to go to the cave and wait at the entrance every day, quietly asking the Bears to share their store with him. And then, one day, something really did happen. As he was turning away, he beheld an ear of corn lying on the ground. Some careless Bear had dropped it, but the father Badger did not despise it because of that. No. He picked it up eagerly, for this was good food, and did he not say that all food came from the Great Father? Therefore it seemed to him this ear of corn had been given to him, to show that the Great Father had heard his cry and had given him something for his needs.

Now many a man might have thought one ear of corn was a very poor gift, after he had worked so hard and had gotten together such a fine store, through his and his family's unflagging labours; but not so Father Badger. Instead of taking home the corn, he went to the Smoke Lodge, or the tepee, which they used as we use a church. Here the Sioux would sit and pray until they were purified of all wrong thoughts and here the father Badger brought his ear of corn, and, placing it before him, sat down on the ground inside the tepee, to give thanks to

the Great Spirit and pray that the corn might be blessed.

At last, he rose, looking very happy, and went out, quite sure that there was food for all and that he had only to go on trusting. Any bitter thoughts he had had against the Bears had rolled away in the haze of the Smoke Lodge; he knew now that he loved his enemies and they were all children of the Great Spirit who sent food for all.

But what was his surprise, to see standing by the tepee, as if waiting for him, a splendid young Dakota brave, clad in the most gorgeous garments, fringed, beaded, and feathered. His eyes were stern and true, but full of kindness for the father Badger and he greeted him as if he were a friend.

Then this magnificent stranger said to Father Badger, "I wish to go with you to your home."

"You will be welcome," said Father Badger, and led him to the little shelter. All made the stranger welcome, and the mother Badger hastened to rub the corn from the one small ear, and grind it into flour, and make a little cake which she placed before their guest.

The stranger said nothing, but accepted the food

and the Badgers entertained him as best they could with song and story. They did not say a word about their troubles nor apologise for the scanty fare which was all they had to offer. But they tried to make the strange guest feel at home and happy.

Next morning there was nothing to offer him but fresh water from the spring, but Father Badger rose up early to go to the Bears' cave and ask once more for food. To his surprise, however, he found the Dakota brave beside him. They walked together and still the Badger never said a word about his errand. When they reached the cave, the Dakota brave stood waiting, looking very grave and splendid, and the Bear, as usual, came to the entrance.

But directly he saw the strange friend of Father Badger, he started back, and hurrying into the cave returned with his hands full of food which he pressed upon Father Badger.

Then did the stranger step forward and say sternly: "That is not enough. You must give him back his home."

At this, every one of the Bears scuttled out just as quickly as they could and flew into the forest,

running on and on, as if they were terribly afraid. And from that day to this, no one ever saw anything more of them. But the Badgers joyfully returned to their home and mended everything the Bears had torn, and soon had their own lovely cave looking as sweet as ever. Then said the stranger, "I go over all the world." And he, too, went away.

Who he was, they never knew, for they never saw him again. But when they heard of good things happening in far-away parts of the country, Father Badger would say: "The Avenger has passed that way."

But one day they heard of another friend.

Who should come through the trees but a little footsore creature, still fat, but not as sleek as he used to be! He ran up to them and cried out, "Little Bear has come to learn how to paint the pretty pictures on the parfleches," (the name they gave to the food bags) and behold, it was the little friend who alone had remembered the Badgers in the time of their affliction.

He had come to live with them and work with them and serve them as a son.

So the Badgers taught Little Bear to make bright

patterns and make everything he wore and used as beautiful as he possibly could.

"Beauty," said Father Badger, "is like food. It comes from the Great Father, and it belongs to all."

THE BIRDS WHO BEFRIENDED A KING

A Tale of Arabia

THIS is how the Hoopoes came to know the great King Solomon. Once he was far out in the wilderness, for there was no part of his kingdom that Solomon did not visit; he had seen that the great store city was finished to his liking, even Tadmor in the desert, and across the sand, the King's cavalcade made its way, with the camels and the dromedaries and their broidered saddle-cloths bright as flowers, and jewelled bridles flashing as brightly as the sun itself. But the heat smote down on the King's head, and Solomon yearned for shade. As if in answer to his longing, who should appear but a flock of Hoopoes. Being curious by nature, they circled round until they reached the King's camel and kept just overhead, so that they might watch this most famous of all monarchs and perchance overhear some word of wisdom. Thus the little

birds cast a grateful shadow over the King for his whole journey and richly repaid they were, for Solomon always polite to the humblest creature in his kingdom, conversed freely with them during the whole time. When they reached his palace, he thanked them for the service they had done him, and asked what he could do in return.

Now the Hoopoes had begun their conversation with Solomon modestly enough; in fact, they had been very surprised that he had spoken to them at all. But he had questioned them so kindly about their ways of living, and their likes and preferences and relations, that they lost their fear of him and they came to this wonderful palace and saw all the servants in their shining robes standing behind the King's throne, and waiting at his table, and lining the great court-yard, and when they beheld the walls of ivory inlaid with gold and the golden lions guarding the steps and the white peacocks on the silver terraces, it quite turned their heads to think they had journeyed right across the desert with the owner of these riches.

So instead of answering Solomon with thanks on their part and telling him his words of wisdom were

rich reward for any shelter they had given, the Hoopoes begged leave to consult together and withdrew to the palace roof where they discussed what they would ask for.

Finally they decided they would like golden crowns such as the King himself wore; then they could return to the other birds and reign over them. Thereupon the little birds flew down with a rush and made their request to the King as he walked in his wonderful garden.

"What the King has said, the King has said," Solomon replied. "The gift you desire shall be granted; yet, because you rendered me true service, when you wish to get rid of your crowns, you may return and exchange them for wisdom."

"Nay, King," said the Hoopoes. "Well we know that wisdom has brought you great renown, but no one would bow down to you or give attention to your words, unless you wore your golden crown. We shall be able to repeat your wise words profitably now, for all will listen when they see gold crowns on our heads too."

"All the same, return to me without fear or shame, if your crowns do not satisfy," said King

Solomon kindly and ordered his goldsmiths to supply the Hoopoes with crowns of the finest gold procurable. Off flew the silly little birds, therefore, with the shining crowns upon their heads, prouder than the peacocks and chattering more loudly than the parrots and macaws.

They could scarcely wait to get back to their friends and hear their exclamations. But when the Hoopoes informed their friends they were now Kings of the Bird World, their friends only laughed and said they were quite satisfied with Solomon, and he was the only King they wished or needed. Then they drove the Hoopoes from the trees for their golden crowns were always catching in the branches and the other birds became tired of helping them out. But the Hoopoes decided the other birds were jealous and, rather flattered, gathered round the pools so that they could admire themselves in the water. Very soon people began to notice the queer antics of the silly little things as they strutted up and down, cocking their heads first this side, then that, and finally a man caught one and discovered the wonderful golden crown it wore. He hurried off with it to a goldsmith who gave him so high a price for it, that

the man rushed back to the pool and laid snares for the Hoopoes, who were so taken up with admiring themselves that they walked straight into them. Then came the saddest time for the Hoopoes. Every one began to hunt them. The poor little birds could not go to the wells and the pools for they were thick with nets, they could not go into the gardens for fowlers lurked behind the flowers, they could not fly up onto the housetops for even there the people had set traps for them. There did not seem a spot on the earth where they could rest, and at last, the wretched little birds flew back to the palace and waited till they beheld the great King Solomon coming along his terrace, listening to his singers as they performed in the cool of the evening.

"Oh, King," said they, "we have found that golden crowns are vanity; we know not what you do to keep yourself from being chased about and hunted, and so we have come to ask you to remove ours from us."

"Beloved Hoopoes," said the King, "a crown that people are expected to bow down to, always sits heavy on the head, and a crown that excites envy, is a net for the feet. The only crown that can be

worn with comfort is the crown of service, and that crown should spring up naturally so that no one takes any particular notice of it."

"Give us that crown of service, oh wise king," said the poor little Hoopoes very humbly, for they wanted nothing better now than to be taken no notice of.

"May it shelter you even as it sheltered me," said the great King; and on their heads, the Hoopoes beheld crowns of feathers. But with these crowns came quite a new feeling to the Hoopoes; they no longer wished to rule but to serve.

Now the Arabian legend has it, Solomon had a wonderful flying carpet, where he sat on a golden throne with all his attendants round him. Mindful of the Hoopoes' usefulness, he summoned all the birds to make a flying canopy; the Eagle was placed at their head, but the Hoopoes were placed immediately over Solomon as he sat in the centre of his court. Thus shadowed, Solomon and his friends and servants would rise from the ground and travel across the desert and over sea and land, in cool and comfort.

One day, however, when they were right out in

King Solomon and the Hoopoe

the wilderness and the sun was beating down with all its might, a ray of sunlight flashed through and struck the King's face. A hole had appeared in the canopy.

Naturally word was passed to the Eagle who flew up at once to see what had happened, and thus perceived one of the Hoopoes was absent from its place, leaving a hole through which the sunbeam entered. The Eagle presented itself before Solomon therefore, and told the amazing news; and Solomon ordered the Eagle to hasten off at once and find the missing Hoopoe who must have soared up and above the heads of all the other birds to make its escape, for no one had seen it go.

Off went the Eagle, rising up and up until it was lost to sight in the high skies. But though no one on earth could see the Eagle now, his sight was very keen and presently he beheld a speck winging its way across the distant desert and swooping down, met the missing Hoopoe.

"Where have you been?" cried the Eagle.

"Where black marble cuts the air,
In great walls, all shining bare,
Standing by the waterside:—

There a great queen I espied.
Golden tubs of orange trees
Stand against the walls, but these
Are not half as bright as she,
Sitting in great majesty.
She is called the Queen Balkis
And her land a garden is,
Lying over there, so far,
Right across Arabia."

The Hoopoe was so excited it broke into verse, because it could not express its feelings any other way; but the Eagle was terribly angry. The Hoopoe did not seem to mind having deserted Solomon; there it soared and circled, making up poetry about a Queen as if it had done nothing wrong at all!

"And in the meantime, what do you think the great and wise King Solomon has been doing?" thundered the Eagle, "whose noble head you are supposed to shield?"

"Ah, spare me, I beg," said the little Hoopoe, "for the sake of no other than our wise and noble King."

"Spare you for his sake?" said the Eagle, very surprised. "What mercy do you deserve? And how can sparing you, help our great King?"

"Nevertheless, I say, spare me for his sake," re-

peated the Hoopoe, "and take me back with you as quickly as you please, for I have a most urgent message to deliver to no other than Solomon himself."

The Eagle was so surprised at the Hoopoe's boldness, that he allowed it to accompany him back to the Flying Carpet, and the Hoopoe flew onto the arm of Solomon's throne.

"I found it far across the desert," said the Eagle.

But before the Eagle could say another word, the Hoopoe broke in with

"Oh, great King, beyond your lands
A black marble palace stands
With a wondrous queen therein,
Golden hair and golden skin.
Golden oranges aglow
Stand before her in a row,
Brighter than gold fruit she is,
And her name is Queen Balkis."

"And how did you come to visit her?" said Solomon, very sternly. "Were you not on duty, and know you not the penalty for those who fly from duty?"

"Mercy," cried the Hoopoe, "even as you some day must ask for mercy. Yes, great King, I have

sinned and I know full well that I deserve dire punishment, but let me tell you the wonders I have seen and give the message that has been given me, ere you crush me with your hand."

"Why should I hearken to you?" said Solomon.

"Because no less than the King himself hath said, he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise," returned the Hoopoe. "Know that I had heard of the wonderful Queen of Sheba from a bird I met at Mecca; and as we flew across Arabia, I looked out and beheld the land of which so much had been told me. Nay, had not I heard the Queen who lived there was richer than even the great King, my master? So I could not resist flying down from the canopy and having a look. Has not the great King said, 'The desire accomplished is sweet to the soul?'"

"Aye, and the way of a fool is right in his own eyes," said Solomon sternly.

"Ah, great King, crush me not till I have given the message," cried the Hoopoe, "until you have heard the whole of a story, you cannot judge. Hearken to the story of my visit.

"Fertile and abundant in spices and gums is the land of Sheba, but I could notice little for wonder at

the marble palace all jet black which rose from the centre of the kingdom. Yet, as I reached the palace, I ceased to wonder thereat, for seated on a throne of ebony was the most beautiful queen it is possible to imagine, with golden hair rippling over the steps of the throne and fanned by dozens of servants, into a whirling, golden cloud. I asked why they were fanning her and they said because the Queen's crown sat so heavy on her she could not bear the weight of her own hair. I flew in amongst the perfumed tresses, fine as golden rain, and thus I came close to her and heard her whispering to herself that she lacked wisdom and understanding and knew not how to govern her kingdom.

"'Mighty Queen Balkis,' said I, 'Hearken to the counsel of a little bird who is servant of the wisest King in the whole world. Well do I know that Solomon knows how to govern his kingdom wisely, for I have worn a crown myself and know how difficult it is to rule. But Solomon relieved me of my crown of gold and gave me this which I wear in comfort. A crown that every one is expected to bow down to, sits heavy on the head; the only crown that can be worn with ease is the crown of service.'

"'Oh, wise words,' said the Queen, 'happy bird to know the great King Solomon. Go to your master and ask if his wisdom has taught him kindness, and if he would deign to advise a weak and sorrowful Queen who has scarcely the courage to cross the desert and present herself before the throne of one who has ruled his kingdom so well.'

"And now, what is your answer, oh, Solomon? Am I to return and tell her she may come and learn of your wisdom, or will you crush a little bird in your hand whose only fault is that it is too curious, a fault by the bye, which led me to fly over your head the first time we met one another."

"Be assured," said Solomon. "For that word spoken in season, your sin shall be forgiven. Fly back to the Queen, with this signet ring and tell her where a little bird does not fear to come, a Queen may safely follow. If a Hoopoe can learn wisdom and put it to such profit, shall not a Queen?"

Then the Hoopoe joyfully rose up from the hand of Solomon and flew back to Queen Balkis; and when that wonderful procession safely reached Solomon's palace, and the great Queen Balkis and the long, long train of camels laden with spices and precious

stones and gold and ebony and ivory, knelt before his throne, the little Hoopoe circled in the air above their heads, singing in its glad shrill voice these words that the King so often uttered:

"A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver. As an earring of gold and an ornament of fine gold, so is a wise reprover upon an obedient ear!"

THE CATTLE THAT CAME

A Tale of Bulgaria

ONCE upon a time, a young couple went up on a great mountain to build a little home. They had no money at all, and a spade and an axe were their sole possessions, but they knew the world was full of good things for those who have courage and kindness, and they set out bravely to fell the trees and dig the ground until they had cleared a little space for a cottage. They lived on wild berries and nuts until their first crops rose, and by dint of working, early and late, they presently had a fine cottage and then a prosperous farm. They exchanged berries for seed, and their crops for clothes and furnishings, until six children had been born to them, each as pretty as a forest flower and as sturdy. By the time Peter, the eldest, was seven, the trees in the orchard were laden with fruit, roses climbed over the roof and the chimney of the cot-

tage, and flowers grew along the garden path; and the farmer and his wife often turned their eyes to the meadows on the mountain and wondered if they would ever have enough to buy cattle to graze thereon.

One fine afternoon in the time of harvest the children were helping their parents gather the cherries and early apples. Suddenly the mother, looking up, saw a great eagle high overhead carrying something, and on gazing closely she perceived the bird held a baby. She gave a loud shriek and called her husband who rushed out with his spade waving and calling, but the bird still hovered overhead. Just then, however, the children hearing their parents' cries, popped their heads out of the trees to see what was happening. Out of the top of the cherry tree, came Peter and John and James, from the apple tree peeped little Rozsa and Pille, and Baby Blue-eyes rolling on the grass, sat up and stared.

On seeing the poor little baby high in the air, the children shrieked with their parents, and frightened at the noise, Baby Blue-eyes lifted her voice in the most ear-piercing wail the family had ever heard. Apparently the eagle had never heard any-

thing like it either, for it rose with a great swoop, dropping the baby to the ground. Fortunately, the farmer's wife held out her apron in time to save it, and then all the family clustered round to behold a most beautiful child, in the finest silken clothes, laughing and crowing and in no way hurt.

As they stood admiring it, who should come out of the forest but an elegant lady, magnificently dressed, with jewels glittering on her outstretched hands. It was plain she was the mother of the little one, and coming up, she thanked them a thousand times for rescuing the child, and begged to know if there was anything they wanted which she could provide. The farmer kept shaking his head, saying they wanted nothing from her for they had done nothing for her beyond their simple duty to the innocent baby, but little Peter piped out suddenly that they were always wishing they had a cow so that they might have milk for breakfast.

On hearing this the lady said six pairs of cattle should arrive, a pair for every child. "But," she added, "they must always be kept together, and belong to all of you. If you sell them or separate them, your prosperity will vanish. It was by calling to-

gether, that you were able to frighten the eagle, even the baby's screams being needed, and it is by living and working together that good will come to you. As long as the cattle graze in your fields your fortune will be secure."

With this the lady departed, and one evening some days after, when the farmer and his wife were resting on the garden bench, what should they see but six magnificent pairs of cattle coming up from the meadows, with the children driving them.

From that day, they enjoyed marvellous prosperity. The farmer and his wife now had absolute confidence that everything they sowed would bear fine harvests. They lost all fear of the future or misfortune, planted boldly, marketed their produce wisely, and by the time the children were grown up, the farmer's estate extended over the mountain, and every child had married and brought his bride or her husband to a snug cottage, near the parents' home. But all ate together in the parents' house, worked together, and shared the produce equally.

Soon each cottage was blessed with children, and a happy circle of little ones carried on the good work of helping in the general good.

Six magnificent pairs of cattle coming up from the meadows, with the children driving them.

But at last the farmer and his wife grew full of years and one day the farmer called his children to his bedside and told them he was leaving for the long journey, and made them promise to continue in loving fellowship and to hold all things in common and remember their prosperity depended on keeping the six pairs of cattle, which had never grown old or feeble, all these years.

For some time after the farmer had passed away, the family remembered his words, and shared the harvests and the land without thought of private profit or possession. Peter, the eldest, looked after the animals, and with his son, attended to the marketing of the extra produce. John saw to the gardens and the fields, with his strapping boys and girls. James and his family cut down the trees, and made the furniture they needed, also the boots and shoes, and further, painted gay flowers on the chairs and chests, and were always around with their tools or paint brush, improving the insides or outsides of the homes when they were not busy at shoemaking. Rozsa and her husband carded and spun and wove the wool from the sheep, and the flax from the field, and with their children, made good strong

clothes for every one, on which Rozsa's little girls and boys embroidered pretty patterns and letters so that every one was gay for Sundays and holidays.

Pille managed the dairy, and made the best butter and cheese ever tasted, while her children drove the cows and milked them, and her husband attended to the chickens, the geese, the turkeys, the ducks, and all the other fowl about the place. And Baby Blue-eyes married a pastry cook, and the two of them cooked the fine dinners they all enjoyed in the big house, and their little ones ran in the woods and found mushrooms and berries and herbs.

Never was there a happier set of people, and, of course, all were always ready to lend a hand when any one wanted help, and glad to teach what they knew, so that in the winter evenings, one might see every one round the fire having an embroidery lesson, or learning how to make some sweetmeat, or hearing stories of the market town where Peter went every month on their business; and in the summer all the children would go nutting or picking berries, and every one would make the hay or cut the crops together.

There was nothing on earth left for them to desire,

and how discontent began to grow up amongst them, like some evil weed, none could say. But grow it certainly did.

It started when Peter began to listen to the other farmers boast of the money each was making and the triumphs they were winning over one another. Some bragged of the fine things they were doing for their children, but Peter noticed they never rejoiced at hearing of the fine things the other farmers were doing for their children. No, every man seemed bent on getting all he could for himself and his, and Peter was told he was a poor sort of father, to work so hard for other people's children, and give his own no more than he gave to the others.

Then John talked with the neighbours who came to see his crops and his vegetables, and he found they were all boasting of the profit they made from this crop or that, and were especially glad when they made more than another had; and they thought John very foolish to let all the family enjoy the things he raised, without setting apart the best for his own use, and his children's use.

Then James began to get his head turned by the compliments strangers paid the family on the pretty

things in their homes; every one marvelled to hear that James had made everything, and several took him aside and said it was absurd such a clever fellow should be at the beck and call of a whole circle of relations and he ought to go to the city for his children's sake, and make a name for himself and a big fortune and give them a good education and see that they advanced in the world. Even Rozsa and her husband were not left in peace, for when the family sallied out to church or a merry-making, every one remarked on the quality and beauty of their clothes, and when they heard they were made at home, cried that Rozsa ought to set up a shop and make for all the grand people roundabout. It was sheer waste to put such clever work into the clothes of her own family.

Pille and her husband were approached by men from foreign parts who wanted cargoes for their ships, and thought the casks of cheese and butter would be all the better for a trip across the ocean; and Baby Blue-eyes and her husband received a visit from no other than the steward of the King of the land, saying he had heard of their skill, and desired their services for the State banquets. When Baby

Blue-eyes and her husband explained this excellent cooking was just for home use, and the delicious sweetmeats were tasted by no one but the children of the family, and the jellies and delicacies were everyday fare, and at the service of any sick neighbour or any one else who was hungry, the steward threw up his hands and cried he had never heard of such wicked waste. Such excellence should be reserved for Royal banquets.

So one night when they were gathered together, all sitting silent with no more jokes or stories or friendly help, Peter broke out with the news that he was not going to be a fool any longer, but would take his share of the farm and do the best he could for himself; and then the others joined in, repeating the compliments they had received on their cleverness, and every one saying they were doing too much for the others, more than their fair share, and could do very much better for themselves and their children.

So the next thing was to divide the property; and you may be sure each held a very different opinion from what the others did, about what he or she deserved, and finally they came to the six pairs of

cattle, and found they could not divide them up for there were only twelve cattle and there were no less than forty-three members of the family. Besides they could not forget their father's warning that if the cattle were divided their prosperity would end. So at last Peter proposed that they should all drive the cattle from the meadows, and the one whose cottage they stopped nearest to should have the lot. After much wrangling they agreed to this, and all set out to drive the cattle home. But of course no one would let the cattle stop at any one else's cottage and they belaboured the poor beasts so unmercifully that at last the cattle threw up their heads, lashed their tails, and broke into a frenzied gallop, right over the mountain top. Up flew the family after them, and found themselves standing on the edge of a great precipice with the poor cattle sinking in the swamp far below.

The moans of the poor creatures rose up to them, and the family at last saw what they had done, and came home weeping and quarrelling, each laying the blame on the other.

Then no one cared to do any work, for all feared

that ill luck would come on everything; and indeed, everything they touched did seem to turn out badly. For the first time in their lives they sat down to heavy bread and soup with too much salt in it. John forgot to water his young cauliflower plants and found them withered quite away; the butter wouldn't churn and the cheese wouldn't set; and so it went from day to day. The worst effect of all was, that the children no longer played with one another, but threw stones and mud and said hard words even as their parents did.

No one had divided the lands yet, and no one had the heart to make a move in that direction. But at last one evening when they were round the fire, bemoaning their sad fate, Peter spoke out and said:

"We have all been to blame, every one of us, for we broke our promise to our father in the first place, and then, we stopped loving each other. Instead of being grateful for all the good that had been given us, we began to want more than we could use, and for the poor purpose of exulting over our neighbours, and even our own brothers. This punishment is deserved and at least we need not be cowardly enough to grumble at it."

These were the first true words the family had heard for many a day and John was ready enough to agree, and so was James, and finally Rozsa and Pille chimed in with: "Yes, prosperity has gone from us forever but we can still keep our word to our father and go on living together. We ourselves will gladly do our best for every one again."

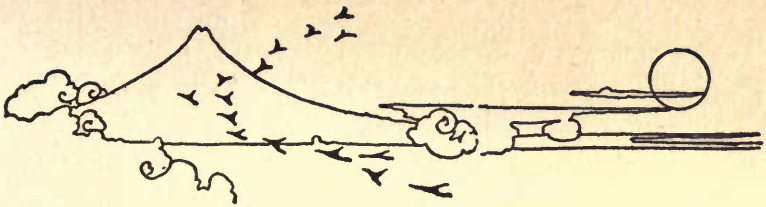
"Yes, yes," cried Baby Blue-eyes, "though the poor cattle are gone, I am grateful we are all left. I never wanted to cook for the King's grand guests, and we will see that no more spoilt dishes come to table. At least we can do our best to help and happify each other." All joined in with this, and that night all embraced on parting and, though all were saddened, once more love and kindness reigned.

From that day the family returned to their own ways, save that each worked with added diligence; and mothers, and fathers too, were quick to see that the little ones lived in friendship with each other and allowed no quarrelling to spring up again.

Then, to their great surprise, instead of their prosperity coming to an end, as they expected, everything they did succeeded more and more; never had they had such harvests as they beheld next year;

never had the children looked so well and beautiful; never had their homes looked so charming. They asked one another how this could have happened, for the words of the lady and of their father must surely have been true; until Peter suddenly exclaimed, "Why, of course, we did not separate the cattle; we were saved in time, by the poor creatures' fate."

"Yet it was our selfishness that drove them to their doom," said John very soberly. But at that moment what should they hear but a great shout of joy coming nearer and nearer, and rushing to the door of the house, in which they were waiting for the children to come home to dinner, they beheld the six pairs of cattle driven by the children. How the cattle had got out of the swamp and into the meadows none ever knew, but returning from the forest where the little ones had spent the morning gathering berries, the children had beheld the cattle quietly grazing, and had driven them home in joy and triumph, even as their parents had driven them home, long years ago.



LAZY TARO

A Tale of Japan

ONCE upon a time there was a boy called Lazy Taro who lived all by himself in a little house by the roadside in Japan. The house was made with an open front and raised a very little from the road so that Taro lay all day on a sort of covered platform, from which he could watch every one going by and where he could see the rice-fields and the wild geese and the river and the distant mountain.

He was not ill; he was merely lazy. No one knew where he came from nor who his parents were, nor did he. He had been found in a basket tied to a persimmon tree, and had been taken into the home of a farmer, but he was such a nuisance with his lazy habits that the farmer was glad to be rid of him. You may wonder that he did not turn Taro out into the road without a home, as he would not work, but

Taro was very handsome and very cheerful and amusing, so the farmer could not help being fond of him. He gave Taro this little house all to him-

He had been found in a basket tied to a persimmon tree.

self, just a covering for his head, you might say, and left him to watch the people going by and talk and joke with them.

You will ask how Taro got his food. Well,

people were kind-hearted and used to give him what they could spare.

Taro soon grew to consider himself superior to the people who worked, in fact, he felt quite like a king, lounging there doing nothing, with the people passing and coming up to him to have a chat. He knew what every one was doing, you may be sure, how many times they went to the town, and what they brought back, and whom they went with.

Taro was a sort of newspaper to the country folk, for they could always find out about their neighbours when they talked to him. But, dear me, how lazy Taro became as the years went by and he grew up till he was quite a big boy, handsome and strong enough to be of real use in the world.

One day the farmer's wife brought him some rice dumplings which she had just made and wanted Taro to eat while they were hot. Taro thanked her in his delightful way, for he had practised thanking people so much, he could do it most beautifully now; in fact, people were eager to bring food to Taro so that they might have the pleasure of being thanked by him. I can tell you the farmer's wife went off,

feeling that Taro had done her quite an honour in accepting her dumplings.

But Taro did not enjoy them hot after all; the dumplings had been put down on his platform a little distance from him, and when he stretched out his hand to take them, he knocked the dish over and they rolled into the road.

Now on the days when there was no market few people passed, and for three whole days Taro lay there looking at the dumplings in the road, too lazy to lean over and pick them up.

On the third day, he saw some one coming at last. It did not matter to Taro that the traveller was riding on a fine horse and attended by several servants; as he came up, Taro bawled out, "Hi, Hi, pick up my dumplings, please." You will notice Taro said please; he prided himself on the fact that he always took the trouble to do that.

The gentleman was so surprised at being shouted at like this, that he actually pulled up his horse and, telling a servant to get the dumplings out of the dust, came to the side of Taro's little house.

"What is the matter with you?" said he.

Now it seemed so natural to Taro to be lazy, that

he explained that he had dropped the dumplings three days ago, and no one had come by to pick them up, in a most injured voice.

"And my dear friend particularly wanted me to eat them when they were hot," said Taro.

"Why did you not pick them up yourself?" asked the gentleman, who was no other than the Governor of the Province.

"Oh, well, you see, it is such a trouble to move," said Taro, as if that were a perfectly good excuse. "I'd much rather not have the dumplings than move. But as you are in the road and actually passing my dumplings, I thought it would be no trouble for you to stop and pick them up."

"Well, you certainly are the laziest fellow I have ever met in my life," said the Governor. "Do you intend to spend all your life, lying there?"

"One day is enough to live at a time," said Taro easily. "The tree yonder never moves and is contented enough."

"Yes, but the tree is bearing fruit, and giving shade to the wayfarers and shelter to the birds in its boughs," said the Governor. "You are encumbering the ground with your idle body; see, how you have

hindered us. Is not our time as valuable as yours, pray, that we should have to stop to wait on you? Come, you look a good-natured fellow, and I can see you have plenty of strength and good sense. I will give you that rice-field yonder and start you in a useful activity."

"Oh, dear, no," said Taro. "That is far too big a gift. The only rice I want is rice cooked up into dumplings or broth. I certainly don't want a field to take care of, through winter and summer."

"Well, maybe the work would be hard, as you are used to lying still all day," said the Governor. "I will give you some money to start a shop—"

"Dear, dear, no!" said Taro very firmly. "A business of my own would be much too much trouble. If you will just hand me my dumplings, that is all I desire, thank you very much all the same."

The Governor could not help smiling at Taro's coolness and leaving him with his dumplings, he rode on.

Of course Taro told this story to every one, pointing out what a fool a man was to be a Governor and have to go riding about the country wherever

the Emperor sent him. Every one thought Taro more wonderful than ever, when they heard how the Governor himself had stopped to wait on him and Taro became more and more conceited until he thought himself better than any king in the world.

But one day when there was a group of people around his platform, begging him to accept their dainties, an old peasant came along the road. He had been fishing in the river and carried his nets on his back and his catch of fish dangled from his hand. Now Taro was fond of fish, and when he saw the peasant, he said to one of his friends, "Now you are here, you can build me a little fire and roast one of those fine fishes for me." Then, raising his voice, Taro called out in his politest tones, "Honoured Sir, what a wonderful fisherman you are. I have never seen such a fine catch come up from the river. Pray, let me taste a sample of your skill."

"My fish is ordered in the town," said the fisherman quietly. "Why do you not go down to the river yourself and catch some, if you are fond of fish?"

"Because I do not care to run hither and thither as other men do," said Taro, as if he were very superior because of this. "I have quite enough to

look at here, the river is no more beautiful when one is on its shore than when one sees it from across the rice-field."

"You remind me of the frog who went to Kyoto," said the fisherman, and as Taro and every one begged for the story, the fisherman spoke as follows:

"A frog lived in a well by the city of Kyoto, and another frog in a lotus pond at Osaka by the sea. Now the Kyoto frog used to listen to the people who came to draw the water from the well, and he often heard them use this proverb: 'The frog in the well knows not the great ocean.' At last he made up his mind to go to Osaka and see the ocean for himself. At this same time, the frog at Osaka, heard the monks as they walked in the garden, say, 'The lion's cub is thrown into the valley,' and at last he too made up his mind to hop out of his pond, and travel to Kyoto, to show he was as great as a lion's cub.

The two frogs, therefore, started their journeys, the one to Kyoto, the other to Osaka. But by the time they reached the hill midway between their homes, each was very sore and stiff, for as you know, a frog squats and squawks all day and is not used

to journeying on the road like men. They sympathised with each other, and then they hit on the bright notion of standing up on their hind legs, and having a look at their destinations, instead of troubling to go all the way thither. So the Kyoto frog stood up to look at Osaka and the Osaka frog to look at Kyoto. But as you all know, the eyes of a frog are set in the back of his head, and when they stood up, they looked backwards, and the Kyoto frog looked at Kyoto and the Osaka frog looked at Osaka.

"Therefore each said the place he was bound for was exactly like his own home and not worth travelling to see, and the Kyoto frog returned to his admiring friends and told them the ocean at Osaka was no bigger than his well at Kyoto, and the Osaka frog returned home and told his admiring friends that the city of Kyoto was no bigger than his monastery. They remained, therefore, for the rest of their lives in their own homes, thoroughly satisfied with themselves and with their knowledge of the world."

With this, the fisherman went his way, leaving Taro very angry and Taro's friends sniggering to

one another, for this time the laugh was decidedly against Taro.

Now from that day Taro began to be not quite so pleased with himself; for one thing every one who passed, took to calling him "Froggy." One day a string of riders came along the road, carrying a proclamation and when they saw Taro they stopped and told him the Prince of the country needed some strong, young men to serve him and Taro should offer his services. Of course Taro laughed very loudly at the idea of his going as a servant to the palace like any one else, but that night, he could not sleep, and, as he lay watching the rice-fields and the river in the moonlight, where even at this late hour, people were working, it suddenly occurred to him how kind every one had been in bringing him food. And then he thought how little he had done for any one, and then he longed and longed to do something for somebody else.

Then he remembered that the Prince's servants had said Taro was just the fellow the Prince needed in his palace, and actually lazy Taro jumped up, and just as he was, in his old rags, hurried as quickly as he could down the road and journeyed on and on

until he reached the palace and offered himself for service like any other poor boy, at the back door. Of course Taro did not know how to do anything useful and all they could find for him to do, was to sweep out the rooms early in the morning before any one was down.

But the funny thing was, when Taro began to work, he found he just loved working. It was perfectly glorious to see the dust fly before his broom, and to leave the palace clean and shining after he had passed through. He could not bear to stop work when every one arose, and so begged that he might sweep the garden paths during the day, which he was allowed to do. Thus he became acquainted with the wonderful flowers that grew in the palace garden, and from brushing the paths, he began to see numberless little kindnesses he might do for the flowers. He removed grubs that were spoiling the tender leaves, tied up broken branches, removed seedpods that crowded too thickly on the growing flowers, and presently attracted the attention of the head-gardener. He took Taro to work in the garden and taught him much.

And then quite suddenly, just as Taro was feeling

The moon was shining pale and fair over the palace roof.

he was really of some use in the world, and when he was so happy in his work he felt he could never be happier, the Prince sent word that Taro was to guard the gate that looked on the city street.

So Taro was taken away from his beloved flowers and active life, and put to stand day and night, alone and motionless before the palace gate. Oh, how he missed his flowers! And how he hated standing still, after his busy labours. But he had come to serve the Prince and of course he never dreamed of disobeying.

One night when he was on guard, and the moon was shining pale and fair

over the palace roof, Taro thought of that night when he had lain awake thinking of the people who had passed and told him of the Prince's proclamation, and like a flash, he saw his little house with the sides of matting, and the silent pine tree guarding it, and a poem burst from his heart.

"Autumn's full moon:
Lo, the shadow of a pine-tree
Upon the mats."

And that little poem said all he felt about that wonderful still night when the silent pine tree had cast its interlacing tracery upon the walls of his silent house.

Then poems began to spring out of his heart like flowers; he thought of the day when he swept the garden paths in all their wintry splendour, and this poem came:

"To-day, at last to-day,
I grew to wish to raise
The chrysanthemum flowers."

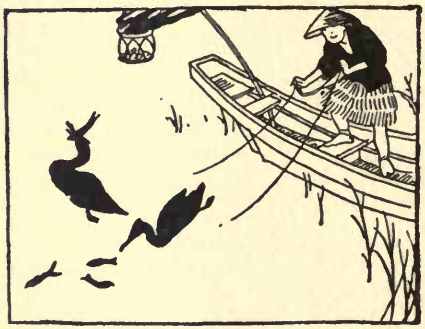
And then he thought of another:

"Yellow chrysanthemum, white chrysanthemum,
Why, the other names for me,
Are of no use."

And as the dawn rose, and the sun flashed out, he cried,

"Ah, how sublime—
The green leaves, the young leaves,
In the light of the sun."

Soon the people began to gather round Taro as he stood at the gate, for the Japanese love poetry, and



Taro presented to him a beautiful boat, with a pair of cormorants.

specially poems which are easy to understand like Taro's were. He soon became a great popular poet, and one day the Prince sent for him and asked him to repeat some of his poems, which Taro did. The Prince was so pleased he took Taro to see the Emperor, who became very interested when he heard

the story of Taro's life and ordered his Minister to make inquires about Taro's parentage.

Thus it was discovered that Taro was really the son of the Prince; he had been stolen from his father's garden when he was a tiny baby, and cruelly abandoned. Taro was raised to high honour and was made Governor of the province in which he had lived, because the Emperor thought no one would understand those people better than Taro.

Taro became a very hard-working person now, sparing himself no trouble in doing things for the neighbourhood. The first person he went to see was the old fisherman, to whom Taro presented a beautiful boat with a pair of cormorants, to aid the fisherman in his task.

But you will notice that as long as Taro remained lazy, and useless, nobody troubled to find out anything about him. It was only when he became of real value that the truth was revealed that he was the son of a Prince and he was restored to his father's home.

THE PRINCE AND THE EAGLE

A Tale of Greece

ONCE upon a time there was a King who had three sons. Now, one day he had a fancy for a dish prepared with the fat of a male hare, and sent his sons to hunt in the woods. The older brothers found nothing, but when they were returning home they met the youngest brother carrying two male hares. At this they were very angry, for they had refused to let him come with them on the chase, as he was inexperienced and they did not want him to learn anything from them and capture the prize. Yet now he had caught these two fine hares all by himself, while they had nothing.

So they loitered behind together, planning how they could spoil his triumph and keep their father's favour for themselves.

Presently they came to a well surrounded with marble slabs over which the water trickled. It was

a very old well, in a dark part of the forest, and few people used it. But the water gurgled and splashed in a refreshing way, and the eldest brother stopped when he saw it and proposed they should have a drink.

"Let us drink, however, in order of our age," said he cunningly. "I will drink first, then the next in age, and then the youngest." He lay down to drink, however, leaning far over the well, and calling out how delicious the water was and how easy it was to obtain a good draught this way; and the second brother followed his example, also calling out how cool and delicious the water was, and how convenient it was to drink when one leaned right over. So of course when the youngest brother knelt down, he stretched himself flat on the stones and imitated the way they had leaned over the water. This was what the elder brothers wished, and taking his feet they pushed him right into the well.

Then they took the two hares and went off to their father, weeping and wailing and pretending to be terribly sorry they had lost their brother. They told their father he had been carried off by a band of robbers, and pretended they had been so busy

Placing its beak against his arm, restored first one muscle and then the other.

chasing the hares that they had been separated from him and had not been able to overtake the robbers and rescue their brother in time.

The King was so distressed to hear that his best-loved son was lost that he took no notice of their hares; instead of feasting, he and the Queen put on mourning and there was great sadness throughout the kingdom.

But the youngest Prince whom they had thrown into the well, was not really drowned or lost. He continued to fall and fall for ever so long until instead of descending with a bump at the bottom, he stepped gently onto dry land, and found himself in what the Macedonians call the Nether World.

It was quite dark, but after he had walked a little way, he began to get used to the gloom and presently he saw a light in the distance and, coming up, beheld a cottage. He looked through the window and saw an old woman kneading dough. She had no water, but was weeping bitterly and kneaded the dough with her tears. The Prince felt very sorry for her and tapped at the door. When she opened it he asked if he might not fetch some water for her so that she might mix her dough. "For," said the

Prince, "I am very hungry and should be grateful for a piece of hot bread."

But the old woman told him they had no water at all. There was a well, certainly, but it was guarded by a dragon. Every now and then it demanded a maiden, which had to be given it for its dinner, before it would allow the countryside to have any of the water it so selfishly and cruelly guarded. The old woman was weeping because her only daughter was now bound to a tree waiting for the dragon to come.

"Well, I am sorely in need of food," said the Prince, "but if you will put that little cake on the ashes and give me a piece when it is baked, I will willingly rescue your daughter."

"That is impossible," said the old woman. "The King and his army have been trying to overcome the dragon for years without any success. How could a boy like you conquer it?"

At this moment, they heard a cry, "Kra kra," from the corner of the room, and turning round, the Prince beheld a great golden eagle standing in the corner of the cottage. It flapped its wings and uttered the strange sound again, as if to encourage

the Prince. He asked what such a beautiful great bird was doing, standing in a corner of a cottage, and the old woman told him her husband had left her this bird to take care of, and for a hundred years she had fed it and tended it until it had grown to be the powerful bird the Prince beheld. The next moment, another snorting sound came from another dark corner, and the Prince to his surprise beheld a buffalo standing in the corner behind the door, and heard that the husband had left the buffalo to the old woman and she had tended and fed it also for a hundred years.

"Well, you are not without friends then," said the Prince.

"But now I have nothing to feed them with," said the old woman. "This cake is the last bit of food I have, for as we have no water, no crops will grow. However, though I do not believe you can help me or my daughter, I will give you half of it, for I would not send a stranger away, unfed."

With this the old woman drew the cake from the embers and gave the Prince a good half, and he ate and felt much refreshed.

Then he went off to find the tree where Maruda,

the old woman's daughter, was waiting for the dragon. She could not believe her eyes when the Prince came up to her and cut her bonds. She told him that she was quite ready to be sacrificed so that her mother and all the starving people might have water for their crops, but the Prince assured her that it would be the dragon who would be sacrificed this time, and she was to go to a little hill where she could stay in safety and watch the death of the dragon.

Just then, a terrible roar was heard, increasing in volume until the whole earth seemed to shake with the din. Maruda made haste to get to the hill, and no sooner was she safe at the top, than the dragon appeared rising at a great rate through the water of the well which the tree shaded. But the Prince was ready with his trusty sword, and before the dragon could pop its head out, the Prince was at the well, and as the dragon leaped out the Prince cut him in half, casting each part of the dragon clear away from the well so that the water should be unspoiled.

Directly the dragon was slain, the water gushed and gurgled and overflowed from the well, and a great sound of rising water was heard everywhere,

and every fountain and cistern and basin and pond and brook became full of sweet, clear water, enough for all.

The King and his councillors and army were all assembled on the city walls, for news had come that the Prince was to fight the dragon and all expected the presumptuous stranger to be slain. But instead of being slain, there was the Prince walking off with Maruda, and the dragon in two pieces, and the water at last let free for every one. Instead of being pleased, as you might have expected, the King and his councillors and his army were actually annoyed that a stranger should have done what they could not do; therefore with one accord they cried, "Let us turn this presumptuous madman out of the country," and started off to the old woman's cottage where the Prince had taken Maruda.

The Prince was there, of course, telling the old woman that no thanks were due to him.

"If you had not come to my assistance with that cake of bread," said he, "I should never have had the strength to slay the dragon, so the credit is really yours."

Just at that moment they heard the angry noise

of people coming on an evil errand, and looking out of the window, they saw this great crowd of the King, his councillors and army, advancing over the plain, all with their swords held out, ready to slay the Prince. Then the old woman and Maruda began to weep with fear, but the Prince turned to the eagle and said, "Can you not help us, now your mistress who has fed you all these years is in need?"

"Certainly," said the eagle. "You shall all get on my back and I will carry you out of the Nether World; but it will be a long, long journey and we shall need food and water."

"Take me," said the buffalo, "I will readily give myself for this escape. My hide will form a fine bag for the water and my flesh will give a-plenty of meat."

Hence, in a remarkably short time, provision for their journey was obtained and the little party mounted on the back of the great eagle who flew swiftly up into the air just as the enraged crowd arrived at the cottage.

The eagle flew for many days, up and up through the darkness and then across the great clouds of mist

which finally turned into sea. They drank from the water in the buffalo hide and ate the buffalo meat, but at last their store was exhausted and the eagle began to fly more slowly.

"Now he is of the first importance," said the Prince, "and you come next; I must be the first to suffer." Saying this he gave his arm to the eagle and told him to eat from it; and in this way the eagle was enabled to continue the journey until it landed them on the top of a mountain overlooking the Prince's home.

How glorious it was to see the light of the sun again and to look down upon the castle of his father. But before the Prince went down the mountain side the eagle gave him a golden feather from its tail and told him if the Prince were in need of the eagle's help again, the Prince was to burn the feather, and the eagle would smell the scent and come.

Off went the Prince, therefore, with the old woman and Maruda, and wretchedly thin and tattered he looked, with his poor arms torn where he had given his flesh to the eagle. But he had a cheerful courage still and consoled the old woman and Maruda for all that they had suffered, by saying

what a hearty welcome awaited all in the castle, and how overjoyed his father and mother would be to see him again.

But when he came up to the terrace steps with his companions, no one knew him. Instead, all stared with cold eyes at his tattered clothes and wounded arms, and when he came into the hall where his father and mother sat and went forward, he saw his own father did not recognise him, either.

When he told his story, the King shook his head and said his son had disappeared years ago and the Prince must be an impostor. Wretched was the Prince, for it seemed as if he would be turned out of his own home; when suddenly there was a stir among the courtiers and his mother the Queen passed between them. She had heard that a strange man had come to the palace claiming to be the missing Prince, and directly she set eyes on the Prince, for all his rags and wounds and thinness, she cried out, "This is our son whom we thought lost," and rushed forward to weep over him and embrace him.

The heart of a mother is never mistaken. The Prince's sad plight which blinded his father, the King, who remembered a dashing, handsome young

" This is our son whom we thought lost," cried his mother.

prince, could not hide her child from his mother.

She begged the King to hear his story, but the King could not believe this beggar in tatters could be his son; he sent for his other two sons to hear the story and they said they had never heard of such a place as the Nether World, nor of the creature the Prince called a dragon, and if it had been as large as the Prince described, they were sure the Prince could never have slain it.

At this, however, the Prince remembered his feather, and plucking it from his bosom, threw it on the pan of charcoal which burned beside the throne. Instantly a cloud of most delicious perfume ascended and rolled out through the doorway across the terrace toward the mountain where the eagle lived.

Then all present saw what looked to be a golden cloud rise from the top of the mountain and hover in the sky, coming nearer and nearer, until with a great rush the Golden Eagle came down to the terrace. But instead of halting, it flew into the hall to the Prince, and placing its beak against his arm restored first one muscle and then the other, so that the Prince held out his arms whole and strong.

This proved without question that his story was

true, and the King embraced his son and begged his other sons to be taken away and imprisoned for having thrust their brother down the well. But the Prince fell on his knees before the King and begged their forgiveness.

"The ill they would have done me has turned out well for many," said he. "Had they not thrust me down the well, I could never have restored the water to all those poor, starving people, and rescued Maruda and brought her again to her mother. Now I have only to ask that you will grant Maruda and her mother a home in your kingdom where they may live in peace and safety; and so that they may be sure of plenty of water, I ask that a cottage may be built beside the well in the forest.

THE SEVEN SHEEPFOLDS

A Tale of Hungary

ONCE upon a time there was a shepherd who lived on a mountain in a wild and lonely part of Hungary. Wild dogs, foxes, and wolves abounded in the deep ravines filled with dark forests, and among the crags of the mountain peaks, and the shepherd had to be forever on the watch whilst his sheep were grazing. He had several fine sheep-dogs to aid him in his work, and when the lambs strayed down the mountain side, or frisked away to play round the rocky boulders, the faithful sheep-dogs would follow and drive them back to the sheepfold.

This sheepfold was built of stones, and no wolves could enter; it stood near the shepherd's little hut, so that he could easily go back and fro on a dark night when a sick lamb needed attention. It would have been a lonely life for some people, but the shepherd found his dogs good companions; he loved

his sheep and was always busy looking after them; and when the sheep were grazing quietly, he would take out his flute, cut from a willow in the plains below, and play pretty melodies which chimed with the roar of the mountain springs and torrents. Several waterfalls fell from the rocks, plunging down through the forests to the streams below, and so the shepherd was always sure of delicious water for his flock and himself. For food, he gathered wild strawberries which grew in abundance; grew corn in a little clearing by his hut; and kept a few hens so that there was always a new laid egg for his breakfast. Then he had a little flock of goats from whom he received excellent milk, which he made into cheese. His life was very pleasant in the summer, and winter did not lack occupation, for he was fond of carving and painting, and his clever hands decorated everything in his little hut till it looked as gay as a posy of mountain flowers.

One summer day, Bebeck was busy dyeing yarn with juice pressed from various herbs and flowers; he had his pot boiling on a fire of twigs, and was stirring and whistling and thinking of the beautiful coat he would embroider in the coming winter eve-

nings, when he heard an old ewe baa-ing in a piteous manner. The dogs were running around with their noses to the ground and all the sheep were collecting as if something were the matter. So the shepherd had to scatter his fire, and go to see what was doing.

As he got to his troubled flock, two of the dogs went off at a great pace, and it was not long before he noticed a lamb was missing. So off went the shepherd after his faithful sheep-dogs. Soon the pleasant green pasture land was left behind and he found himself in a desolate part of the mountain. Great rocks towered overhead at a terrifying height, the air grew colder and colder, and the perpetual roar and rush of the streams had a melancholy sound. The dogs had disappeared round some boulders and it was as much as he could do to leap from stone to stone, clamouring after them. Then, as he rounded the crag behind which they had vanished, he beheld a dark opening, within which he could hear a dreadful snarling and barking going on; and as he hurried forward to go to his dogs' assistance, they rushed out, one of them bearing the lamb safely in its mouth, and the others dragging out the carcase of a savage wolf. The shepherd's

first thought was for the lamb, which he found to be quite unhurt; he laid it on a tuft of moss, commanding one of the dogs to guard it, and then turned to the others. What was his amazement to find the wolf's hair covered with sparkling gems, diamonds, rubies, sapphires, emeralds, and all manner of stones of great size, flashing brilliantly. Inside the cave, the floor must be covered with precious jewels!

Bidding the sheep-dogs stay on guard, the shepherd went boldly into the dark entrance; he had to stoop, for the roof was low, and soon he found several passages leading in various directions, so that he was puzzled to know which way to go; but he was a lad of great resolution and when he started on anything, never gave in till he had accomplished his purpose. Somewhere inside this cave, there must be a pile of treasure and the shepherd was determined to find it. On he went, therefore, until a light appeared at the end of a narrow passage, and he hastened to it. As he neared it, he found the passage led into a great vaulted cave, and when he stepped inside, he beheld that not only were the walls and floor sparkling with jewels,

but wonderful coloured stones dripped from the ceiling like frozen water, and at the end, formed a canopy for a great throne whereon sat a very aged gentleman. In spite of the fierce look this white-bearded old man cast upon him, Bebeck the shepherd, did not forget his manners. He knew very well that he was but a lad and should show respect to his elders, and so, pulling off his cap, he went forward and made a low bow, saying, "Good evening, grandfather."

"What are you doing here, blundering into my home without invitation?" said the old gentleman. "This is the second time I have been disturbed, for who should enter a few minutes since, but a filthy creature with some other brutes after him."

"He is done for, grandfather," said the shepherd, respectfully. "My dogs have seen to it that the wolf will trouble you no more. I noticed he had carried off a quantity of precious jewels in his coarse hair, however, and thought it well to come in and see what had been happening. My dogs are on guard outside so that the treasure is safe, and if you desire, I will hasten back and restore it to you."

"You are a very polite young man," said the old

gentleman. "If you had not bowed and said grandfather, I would have given a very different welcome. But to show you two can play at the game of politeness, I will tell you to keep the jewels the wolf brought out, in return for ridding my cave of the nuisance; and in return for the pleasant way in which you have greeted me, take up that sack, and fill it with anything you fancy. But do not come back for more; you might find me in a bad temper next time, and then I should see to it that the stones fell down on your head and destroyed you. I must have quiet and can't encourage visitors. Besides, one of these days I shall leave, and Woe betide the man who comes when I am breaking up my home!" The shepherd hastened to thank the old gentleman, and to fill the sack as quickly as possible and then made his best bow and hurried out.

After a good deal of turning and twisting he saw daylight and rushing towards it, came onto the mountain to find he had spent the night inside the caves, and dawn was now shedding its cool light. The dogs and the lamb were still there, none the worse and all the better for their rest, and they all went down the mountain side.

When he came into his hut, the shepherd poured his heap of jewels on the table and wondered at their beauty. They were obviously worth a great deal of money, but the shepherd had no need of any! He was perfectly satisfied with the food the mountain provided, with his dear little hut which his clever fingers had made so bright and gay, and with the work which God had given him to do. Think as hard as he could, he could not discover a single thing he lacked. He did not even wish to keep the jewels lying about, so that he might look at them; his hut was very small and he fitted into it as a nut fits its shell; everything sufficient for his needs was there, and no more.

So at last he took a great pan of milk and churned it till he made a great cheese. While it was still soft, he made a hole in the middle and poured all the jewels within, then he tied the cheese up in a sheet and drained it, and then he pressed it, and by that time he had a great, hard, smooth cheese, that no one would guess was full of treasure. He put the cheese in his cupboard, and that was the end of his fortune as far as he was concerned!

Summer passed, and autumn came and all the

trees in the forest became gold and scarlet, and the shepherd dyed his yarns and got in a fine store of stuffs and yarns for his winter evenings. Then the winds blew loud and the snow fell and it was winter. Now the sheep huddled together in the sheepfold and the shepherd played his flute and painted a grand chest he had made in the summer, in which he would keep the winter coats and furs. For a change, he would take up his needle, and make beautiful patterns on the coat he wore to the town on feastdays and holidays. He had not to hurry, so could stitch as slowly as he pleased and make a thousand petals in a rose. Ah, these were happy evenings, with the door closed, the sheep safe in the fold, the wind howling round the little hut, and within, the candle burning brightly and the wood fire leaping up the chimney and fair flowers growing and glowing on the chest or the coat, till it was summer inside the hut and the shepherd whistled for joy.

But one evening there was such a storm that the torrents sounded as if they must surely flood the mountain, the great trees bent and cracked, and boughs fell everywhere, the wind rushed round the

little hut as if it would tear the roof off, and even the dogs looked up once or twice from their sleep on the hearth. The shepherd, however, was painting a wild strawberry on his chest, and before his eyes, floated so vivid a picture of its pure white flower, and scarlet berry and neat glossy leaves, that blue sky and bright sunshine and fresh grass seemed everywhere, and his whistle had the music of a purling rill, as gentle and delicate.

It was not till the dogs had leapt from the hearth, that the shepherd woke up to the fact that some one was knocking at his door. Then you may be sure he was quick to open it.

Who should stand there, or rather, who should be blown inside directly the door was flung open, but a stranger wrapped in a dark mantle. The shepherd was quick to help him off with it, for it was wet and heavy; and then he saw a handsome, sad-looking man, whose face was oddly familiar to him, though where Bebeck had seen him, he could not think.

However, the stranger was in need of food and shelter, and it was not the time to ask questions. He soon had a chair drawn up to the fire, a flagon

of cordial crushed from the mountain-berries, warming in the embers, and good fresh bread, salted butter, goat cheese, and milk on the table.

Then the stranger drew up his chair and ate heartily, admiring the painted wooden platter, with its garland of blue berries, and the coarse linen cloth fringed and stitched in bright colours. Even the cup he drank from was carved and painted, so that every bite or sup was a pleasure to the eye as well as to the stomach.

They chatted of the storm, and then the talk turned to a pleasanter subject, the beautiful things in the cottage; and pleased and surprised the stranger was to learn the shepherd had made everything from the wood that grew in the forest and the flax that grew on the soil, and the wool that grew on the sheep, and that even the gay colours came from the bark of the trees or herbs in the grass.

"Your face is as bright as your hut," said the stranger. "'Tis indeed good to find such a welcome on this lonely mountain," and the stranger sighed as if his heart were very sad.

"You speak like a man who has travelled much,"

said the simple shepherd, noticing the fine, smooth hands of his guest, and his great signet ring.

"Very far," said the stranger, "from end to end of my kingdom, and everywhere there is nothing but ruin and desolation."

Then the shepherd knew the stranger was no other than the King of Hungary and dropped on his knees, faltering, "Your Majesty," for he had been chatting to him as one friend might to another. But the King said that was just how he liked to be talked to, and told Bebeck to get up again and be sensible.

"You are a clever fellow," said the King, "and 'tis good to find contentment in a mountain hut. But I cannot help remembering my poor people in the cities; the Mongols have burnt the houses to the ground, and there is no money anywhere with which to build them. We need bricks and stones and timbers from afar, and the whole of my fortune will not suffice to purchase what is required. I have travelled through the land and this is the first bright spot I have found. But you have only yourself to think of; I cannot feast or rejoice while my people are homeless."

At this Bebeck's heart grew full, for all his subjects knew the goodness of King Bela, and loved to serve him.

The King finished his supper, and turned again to the painted chest and marvelled at the beauty of the many flowers painted on it. Talking of them, his face grew less miserable, and a look of peace came into his eyes and presently he said he felt he should sleep to-night. So Bebeck hastened to put clean sheets on his rough bed, and made it ready. A great plan was coming into Bebeck's head, and when he had finished, he said to the King, "Now, Your Majesty, I must leave you; two of my dogs will be on guard, so have no fear of any disturbance. I must go out now on an important errand, and if I succeed, it may be that to-morrow morning will find you with sufficient fortune to rebuild the ruined cities of Hungary."

At this King Bela smiled, for it seemed a foolish boast for a poor shepherd to make, but Bebeck continued, "And if I do not return, I beg Your Majesty to take that big cheese and cut it open, for quite a large fortune is in that."

With these words, Bebeck took out from the

chest his entire store of sheepskins and tied them together into a great sack; then putting them and a coil of rope round his shoulders, he bade the King good-night, and calling his dogs to him, stepped out into the storm. The King smiled more than ever as he looked up at the great cheese, but suddenly an idea struck him that the simple shepherd might be giving him a true message, and that in the cheeses which peasants made, there was treasure indeed for a country.

"I must first see that the people have goats and cattle," thought the King, and fell asleep planning for his people's prosperity and happiness. That there was actual treasure of precious gems inside the cheese, he never thought for one moment.

Meanwhile Bebeck had put two of his dogs on guard, and left one at the sheepfold; with the others he went forward up the mountain. He had determined to go again to the treasure cave and risk his life for the King's sake, and the starving people in the plains below.

Terrible was the storm and difficult indeed it was to battle up against the wind and rain, but clad in his stout sheepskin cloak and additionally protected by

the pile of sheepskins on his shoulders, Bebeck pressed forward until the faithful sheep-dogs showed him that the entrance of the cave was reached. He went in, undismayed by the terrific grumblings and rumblings which seemed to be proceeding from the heart of the mountain itself. But as he advanced further and further in, the noise became deafening, the walls of the passage heaved and the very earth seemed to shake under his feet. His dogs crept close to him and whined, and only their devotion to their master induced them to stay with him.

At last he saw a faint light glimmering, no longer bright, and hastening forward, perceived that the brilliant cave was now shaking and heaving as though the storm was convulsing it. Of the old gentleman there was no sign. But as Bebeck stood on the threshold, he perceived the ground was tilting so that a great stream of jewels was flowing down to him, not precious stones this time, but crowns, goblets and rings and brooches. He had but to open the mouth of his sack, and place it on the ground, and the sparkling treasures hastened, as if by their own free will, to fill his huge sack to overflowing.

Quickly he seized the rope and bound it round,

A stream of jewels was flowing down to him

then with the aid of his dogs, he dragged the burden through the passages, arriving outside as a terrific crash indicated that the roof of the cave had tumbled in. Now the storm grew less and by the time he beheld his hut, the stars were out and shining.

In the morning when he heard his guest moving, he quickly went in to prepare breakfast and give his news.

How amazed the King was when Bebeck invited him to the door and there on the hard snow he beheld the mighty pile of treasure.

Then King Bela begged the shepherd to ask him for some gift. "There must be something I can do to show my gratitude," said the King.

"But no," said Bebeck. "My joy consists in giving Your Majesty pleasure, and also in thinking of the prosperous cities and happy people you will now see round you."

"If they are as happy as you, I shall indeed have a happy kingdom," said King Bela, but he went on to beg the shepherd to think of something for himself, and at last Bebeck said, "Well, Your Majesty, as I wander about the mountains after my sheep, I come on flocks belonging to other shepherds; they

suffer as I do, from their lambs and sheep straying into dangerous places. Grant me permission to build some sheepfolds on the mountain tops, so that there will always be a place of refuge and shelter for the straying sheep."

Willingly this request was granted and the King departed, telling the shepherd to keep his cheese as the gems in the sack would be all and more than was needed for the King's people on the plains below.

The King went down to the mountain therefore, and the next day sent people for the treasure, and after that he was busy, arranging for the cities to be built and the peoples' homes restored, so that Bebeck, the shepherd, almost went out of his head.

But one day he received certain of his nobles who said they had come to tell him of a terrible thing that was happening. "There is a low-born shepherd by the name of Bebeck," said they, "who is actually building castles on the top of the highest mountains round his home. They are as strong as fortresses and beautiful as palaces. Pray send an army at once to destroy them and punish the fellow for his presumption."

"Nay," said the King. "Let me go and see them first."

He was smiling to himself, for he had a pretty good idea that the castles were sheepfolds, and sure enough, as he rode up the mountain to Bebeck's hut, he beheld imposing walls rising on every peak around.

Fortunately Bebeck was in his hut when the King arrived, mixing some gruel for a sick lamb. By the happy radiant smile with which Bebeck met the King, the King knew he had done nothing wrong. "I have come to see your sheepfolds, Bebeck," said the King.

"Oh, Your Majesty, I am more grateful than I can ever say," cried Bebeck. "If the storm had not driven you to my cottage, my treasure would still have been hidden in that cheese, of no use to any one, and I would still have been selfishly happy, never thinking of any one outside my cottage. But thanks to Your Majesty's wisdom, who knew I must wish to help others even as Your Majesty does, my treasure is now sold and hundreds of masons and carpenters are at work, making the sheepfolds stout and strong to last forever. We have built rooms for

the shepherds too, and storehouses for provisions, so that if any one is belated with his flock, there will be good shelter for him. And as the mountain tops in winter are somewhat cheerless, beautiful pictures are being carved and painted on the walls."

"So that is why your sheepfolds are thought to be palaces," smiled the King, and went with Bebeck to look at their wonders, with the smile lurking in his eyes and round the corners of his mouth, for so generous had been Bebeck's provision for strangers and wanderers, man or beast, that indeed most beautiful castles had been erected.

Then he went down to the city again, and summoned his nobles who came eager to hear what punishment was to be given the presumptuous shepherd. But King Bela said, "I have gathered you together to tell you I have to-day made Bebeck the greatest noble of you all, for there is no person more worthy of honour in my kingdom; now I wish you all to hear the story of the seven sheepfolds and how they have come to be built."

Then he told them and the nobles bowed their heads abashed, for none of them had done for Hungary what the shepherd Bebeck had been able

to do. The King then had a fine shield painted with a device of Seven Sheepfolds, and sent it to Bebeck, saying this was to be his coat-of-arms. And if Bebeck for the first minute regretted leaving his simple shepherd life and his dear little hut, he soon saw that now he had built the sheepfolds he must see that they were properly kept up, and used to the best advantage.

Soon that mountainous district became populated and prosperous, for the fine stout sheepfolds attracted many shepherds, and their good sheep-dogs kept the forests clear of wild beasts, and Bebeck taught the shepherds how to carve and paint and embroider, so that all were busy of an evening and good and happy.

The flocks of sheep increased so much that they overflowed into the plains and the sheep of Hungary became famous; but more famous still became the beautiful peasant work which is now sold all over the world and is hung in great mansions and palaces.

Thus the beauty of the mountain flowers and streams and forests seen by a simple shepherd, has been spread abroad until it delights the whole world, and many a home is gay with it.

THE CLEVER COMPANIONS

A Tale of India

ONCE upon a time there was a boy who lived in India. He was marvellously clever with his bow and arrow. He could shoot a thread from a spider's web without breaking the web, or a flower from his sister's hair without ruffling a single lock. His sister was very proud of his skill and the boy would keep her standing in the garden for hours on end while he practised shooting at flowers she held in her hand or between her lips or tucked behind her ear or in her hair.

But the boy became so conceited that at last he took no great trouble to save his sister from harm. One day he told her he would shoot away her eyebrow on the morrow.

His sister was very unhappy and went to her other brother to ask what she should do.

Now, every day, Sure Archer, as the boy was

called, asked his sister, before he began his performance, "Is there a cleverer man in the world than I?" and every day his sister answered: "No."

But now her brother told her that when Sure Archer asked the question, to say, "Yes," and that her brother thought so, too. So next morning, when Sure Archer marched up with his bow and arrows, and asked his question proudly, "Is there a cleverer man in the world than I?" the girl answered "Yes." Sure Archer was so surprised he did not

He would keep her standing in the garden for hours on end,

while he practised shooting at flowers she held in her hand.

know what to do. He just stood gaping at her; but to-day his sister did not feel nearly so afraid of him and said: "My brother thinks so, too, and I have no doubt many other people are of our opinion. And even if you shoot off my eyebrow, it will be no proof that you are the cleverest man in the world."

This disturbed Sure Archer so much that he decided to go out into the world and see if he could find any one as clever as himself.

He travelled for many a mile until he

came to a village where a crowd had assembled; joining them, he beheld a boy no older than himself, wrestling with a big man and overthrowing him easily. Everybody applauded the boy and cried out: "Behold Great Wrestler!"

And the boy bowed and smiled and said: "Yes, I am certainly the cleverest man in the world."

"Can you shoot that flower from yonder tree?" cried Sure Archer, pressing into the centre of the ring. Before any one could answer, he lifted his bow to his shoulder and sent a scarlet blossom floating in the air, far above their heads.

Now all the villagers gaped and marvelled and said one to another: "Which is the cleverer of the two?"

The boy who was called Great Wrestler came up to Sure Archer and took him by the hand, and said, "I am going through the world to see if there is any one as clever as I am."

"Why, that is just what I have come out to find," said Sure Archer.

"Let us go along together, then," said Great Wrestler.

Off they started and as Sure Archer could bring

down any fruit from the trees with his arrows, and Great Wrestler could overthrow any obstacle that came in their way, they got along very well.

One day, however, they entered a deep ravine between high mountains and there they heard a terrific noise. It was as if all the lions and tigers in the world were roaring. Less stout-hearted boys might have turned back, but Great Wrestler cried: "I am a match for any lion," and Sure Archer grasped his bow and said, "I will shoot off their whiskers and then they will soon stop squeaking."

On they went, when whom should they see coming along beside the foaming torrent but a boy no bigger than themselves. He it was who was making that extraordinary noise. True, his face was swollen with his exertions and when he got up to them, he was puffing and panting so that he could hardly speak. But he certainly had made more noise than any one they had ever heard before.

He made a polite salutation and said, as well as he could for wheezing and breathing: "My name is Loud Roarer; no one in the world is as clever as

I am, so people say, and I have come out to see for myself if that is true."

"Why, that is just what people say about me," said Great Wrestler and Sure Archer together and at once showed him what they could do, Sure Archer splitting a bubble in the waterfall, and Great Wrestler lifting a huge boulder from the river bed and tossing it to the other bank as easily as if it had been a pebble.

Well now, these three clever fellows stood and wondered at one another and then they agreed to join company and see if there were any other fellows in the world as clever as they were.

"It does not seem possible," said Great Wrestler, and to this they all agreed.

But before they got to the end of the ravine, they beheld something dark and immense in the air, ever so high above their heads, as if a great bird flapped its wings and tumbled over and over in the sky. All stopped to observe and Sure Archer cried out: "Why, it is a boy no bigger than ourselves turning somersaults in the air as he leaps from one side of the rocks to the other."

Loud Roarer at once used his powerful voice to

halloo to him and soon the Tumbler came head over heels down the steep mountain-side, and landed with a leap at their feet.

He made a polite bow and told them he was the cleverest man in the world.

But at this, Loud Roarer let out a great roar of disapproval, Sure Archer twanged his bow and split the feather in Tumbler's cap, and Great Wrestler picked up Tumbler and held him up above the river bed, saying: "Throw me to the ground then if you are cleverer than I." Tumbler got out of the difficulty by making such a sudden twist that he jumped clear over Wrestler's head. Then the four stood and glared.

"The world is getting altogether too full of clever fellows," said Sure Archer. "It cannot be too full of a good thing," said the Tumbler, who was the best tempered of the lot. "I take it you are all on the same quest as I am—may I not join your company and let the four of us go forward together? I do not think it is possible that there can be any more people as clever as we are."

Well, this sounded probable, and they agreed to let Tumbler go with them. They journeyed till they

came to a high mountain. The river was now wide and deep and on the opposite bank was a little house where they could see an old man sitting. They were hungry and desired a night's lodging with comfortable beds, after the day's exercise, so Wrestler threw rocks into the river until there were some stepping-stones, Tumbler leaped across them, Sure Archer shot an arrow with a string tied to it and Loud Roarer called to the old man and asked him for a piece of rope. Finally the rope was tied to the string and pulled across and Wrestler, Archer, and Roarer all came over by its aid.

Then they marched up to the little house, bowed politely, and told the old man what wonderful people they were. "Though I expect you have seen that for yourself already," they added.

But the old man looked at them quietly and merely asked them their business.

They told him they were travelling to find if there were any other people in the world as clever as they.

The old man shook his head at this and said: "Cleverness is of no value unless you use it for some good purpose. My name is Deep Thinker, and

you are welcome to stay at my home for awhile and learn what true cleverness consists of."

The four companions were glad enough of a bed and a good meal and said they would stay for the night, at any rate. But when they had eaten and were sitting out in the moonlight, watching the great mountains towering up around them and hearing the river's mighty sound as it rushed to the loud-voiced ocean just beyond, all fell strangely silent. Tumbler could never leap as high as the mountains. Loud Roarer could never drown the noise of the ocean. Wrestler could never throw down the rocks that loomed against the sky, and Sure Archer could never bring the distant stars to the earth.

Hence they gradually stopped boasting of themselves and their host was able to tell them a little story.

"Let me tell you," said he, "of the jackal who wished to become the King of all the Beasts. He, like you, thought he was the cleverest creature of his kind in all the world. He, too, went out into the world as you have done, and travelled until he came to a dyer's shop. There, as he snuffed round, he

fell into a vat of bright blue dye and coming out, found his coat was entirely blue. Instead of being mortified, he was delighted, for he was sure there was not another Bright Blue Jackal in the world. On and on he stalked till he met some other jackals who admired him immensely. They told the other animals and as no one had ever seen a Bright Blue Jackal before, they listened to his boasting and allowed him to become King of the Animals.

"He mounted on an elephant's back so that all might see and the rest of the animals sat round and admired the jackal in the outside ring.

"But the jackal was not satisfied because his mother was not worshipping him and he sent another jackal to her to tell her to come and see her son. The mother refused to come, however, and sent word that it was not good for a creature to be separated from his kind.

"'Tell my son he will be safe until he begins to howl like any other jackal,' said she. The jackal to whom she spoke was astonished at this saying and told the other jackals, saying: 'Can it be that this creature is like ourselves?'

"'Let us howl, and test him,' said the other jackals, for there is a belief among jackals that every jackal must howl when it hears its fellows or else its fur will fall off. Consequently, when the outer ring of jackals began to bellow, the Bright Blue Jackal thought it must raise its voice or its bright blue coat would disappear and then there would be nothing to worship. But when he raised his voice and brayed, the animals found him out at once and chased him from his throne."

"I do not see why the Bright Blue Jackal is like me," said Sure Archer. "I do not bray." "Nor I," cried Wrestler. "Nor I," cried Tumbler. "And you cannot call my roaring, braying," said Loud Roarer, very indignantly.

"There is one note on which all jackals sing," said Deep Thinker quietly, "and that is in praise of himself and of himself alone. I bid you good-night, for I have had a tiring evening." With this, Deep Thinker retired and the four companions were left to ponder on this last remark.

But instead of thinking it over, they fell to saying that Deep Thinker could not teach them anything.

"Thinking is nothing; any one can think," said Wrestler. "Let us show what we can do."

"That's it," said Sure Archer," he does not understand that we are clever."

"We can soon prove it," said Tumbler.

"Of course, the Blue Jackal had nothing to be proud of because he was no one in particular," said Loud Roarer.

So they put their heads together, and decided each would then and there show his skill. Accordingly, Wrestler ran down to the seashore and lifted a huge boulder and brought it back to the house and put it before the front door; Sure Archer took his bow and shot an arrow through Deep Thinker's window, so that it pinned his hair to the pillow; Tumbler and Loud Roarer than acted together, Loud Roarer making the loudest noise he had ever made in his life, while Tumbler jumped over the house and turned twenty somersaults, without stopping, on the roof.

Having performed these wonderful feats, the four companions were so tired out that they threw themselves down on their beds and fell asleep.

Of course they had wakened Deep Thinker, who

was surprised to find the arrow sticking through his hair in the pillow, and the door of the house blocked up. The noise overhead and the thumps on the roof were also rather alarming. But he got through the window and made his way to the room where the four friends were fast asleep.

He saw at once they had been up to something from the heavy sleep that had come over them and tasting the salt water on Wrestler's hand, he knew he had been down to the sea, whence had come the great boulder.

He saw five arrows were now in Sure Archer's quiver where six had been when he went to bed, and he saw also that Loud Roarer was still puffing and panting, and Tumbler lay with the veins in knots on his forehead as if he had undergone violent exertion. Deep Thinker smiled and went back to bed.

In the morning, when the sun was streaming in, Deep Thinker awakened them and told Wrestler to lift the boulder from the door.

"I could have done anything I pleased with you in the night, my friends," said he quietly. "For after the exhibition of your wonderful strength, you fell asleep like tired dogs and were at my mercy. What

good you meant to accomplish I do not know, so perhaps you will tell me."

It seemed a poor return for his hospitality to tell them they had meant to frighten him; so the four friends said nothing. But when they had breakfast, Deep Thinker told them of a little village nearby where the population was suffering because a landslide had swept away their crops.

"Now, let us see what strong fellows can do with a good purpose moving them," said he, and conducting the four friends thither, Deep Thinker directed Wrestler to move the boulders; Tumbler to leap from point to point and rescue the animals which had fallen down the chasm; Archer to shoot the fruit from the trees that now stood so high up none could reach them; and Loud Roarer to shout until every wild beast was scared away.

On seeing the happiness their efforts had created, the four friends went to Deep Thinker and said, "Without you, we could have done none of this. You are certainly the cleverest man in the world."

But Deep Thinker shook his head and said: "Each has his own work to do. Those who serve the world best are the best workers. Despise no one, but seek

to discover them and be humble of heart, nor boast, nor be vain. However skilful you may be, you are of no value unless your skill is used to good purpose."

The four companions then turned their faces homewards, determined to waste no more of their efforts in showing off their skill, but to find some useful work wherein their prowess could be of service to the world.

TOM OF THE GOATSKIN

A Tale of Ireland

ONCE upon a time there was a poor widow who lived all alone with her little baby in a tiny cottage on the moor. The cottage was no better than a tumble-down cowshed, too poor for the cows to live in. There was nothing but earth for the floor, sods of turf for the walls, and peat for the roof. But the widow could keep a little fire going in the winter and the cottage was snug and warm. This was a good thing, for she was so poor she could not afford many clothes for her baby.

She had not so much as an old rag with which to cover him and he was so big and jolly and fat that her poverty saved her some trouble; for this baby of hers would have grown out of his clothes almost as soon as she put them on.

To keep him warm, she dug a hole in the earth by the fireplace; this she filled with nice, soft warm

peat ashes and put the baby into it and covered him up to his armpits with the ash. You may think this a strange way to bring up a baby, but being an Irish woman she could always find a path out of every difficulty, and when the baby grew bigger, she just kept hollowing out the hole.

In spite of this queer bringing up, the baby grew into the jolliest and most contented little boy. His mother was out all day, whatever the weather, digging potatoes or carrying peat and furze, but Tom in his hole was able to put a sod of peat on the fire, and to push the potatoes into the ashes with a stick and turn them about so that each side was well roasted.

One day, however, the farmer, for whom the widow worked, gave her a goatskin from the scarecrow in the middle of the field and she hastened home with it so happy that she skipped, hippety-hop all the way. At last she had obtained a garment for Tom. When she took Tom out of the hole and put on the goatskin, he was as proud and delighted as she was, and nothing would satisfy him but that he must go out at once and see what the world looked like.

He went over the moor with his red hair as bright as the sun and his grinning face, for after being brought up all one's life in an ash hole, the world seems to be a mighty fine place.

But Tom did not seem so fine a sight to the village at the foot of the moor as the village seemed to him. Tom thought the tumbled-down cottages were grand palaces and the men and women and children finely dressed, although they wore their workaday clothes. It seemed very grand to Tom to have clothes at all.

He could not understand why all the people stared and laughed at him and he had no idea of the funny sight he made with nothing on but his goatskin. Presently he saw the people gathering round a rider on horseback and pushing in among them Tom heard the fine gentleman telling the people that they must all keep in their houses for the giants were coming to steal their cattle and it would go ill with any of the villagers who got in their way.

Tom wanted to know what giants were and was told they were powerful men who lived by taking other people's property. Three of them lived in the neighbourhood so that the people got little peace.

"You look such a gallant fellow, perhaps you will go and settle their hash for them," said a woman laughing. "'Tis because of the giants the farmer who hires your mother keeps so poor. So you may say 'tis because of the giants you have no better clothes than that old goatskin. Why don't you go and show yourself to them and ask what they think of you? Then perhaps they will leave us in quiet."

The woman was laughing at Tom, of course, but he grinned back at her quite cheerfully and said he had come out to see the world and would like to have a look at the giants. So they told Tom where the giants stayed and off he went to the first one, who lived in a great, stone castle, from which a brilliant banner floated.

Servants in satin and cloth of gold stood in the hall which was hung with splendid tapestries. The servants tried to drive Tom away, telling him he had no business to visit a giant in nothing but an old goatskin.

"Why not?" cried Tom. "It is warm and handsome. God made it; and I see some visitors yonder with nothing better than skins on their backs."

With this Tom pointed to the great Irish hounds who were coming up to make friends with him and without wasting any more words on the servants, Tom marched up to the dais at the top of the hall where the giant was sitting at dinner. There was plenty of room and Tom was hungry so he sat down on the bench as easy as anything and took a great bite from a manchet of bread without saying so much as by your leave.

The giant was so surprised to see Tom acting like this that for a moment he had nothing to say; then he bawled out:

"Who let this beggar come in? Somebody drive him away."

"Now never shall it be said an Irishman turned a friend from his table," cried Tom as bold as you like, for having nothing else to talk about in the long winter evenings, his mother had told him often and often what grandly wonderfully hospitable people the Irish were.

"Friend? You're no friend of mine," said the giant.

"Sure, but I am the friend of every one in Ireland," said Tom. "Even a great fat man like

you is dependent on the womenfolk. You'll need my friendship."

"How do you make that out?" asked the giant.

"Do you dig your own praties?" said Tom.

"I'd be too proud to do so," said the giant.

"I'd be too proud to let a widow do it for me if I were a big fat man," said Tom, and gave the giant such a straight look he turned as red as a beet root. Well, Tom and the giant got into friendly conversation, once the giant saw that Tom was not afraid of him, and before parting, the giant promised he would leave the village alone and make a call on the giant who lived next door to him, instead. He also gave Tom a big club.

"It will do to knock down nuts with, finely," said Tom, and off he went to the next giant.

This giant lived in a castle that was all prepared for war. There was a drawbridge and a moat and cannon, and all the servants dressed up in armour and peeping out of the little slips of windows. You never saw such a fear-stricken place, but Tom marched in and when the servants saw he had nothing on but a goatskin, they lost their fear of him and let him in. When he came into the giant's

presence there he was red with rage, puffing and stamping about.

"Why, what are you afraid of?" said Tom.

"Afraid?" said the giant, "I am not afraid of any one."

"Then why are you covered with those iron kettle lids?" said Tom.

"Because of my neighbours," said the giant. "One may come any time."

"I've just left one who is coming," said Tom.

"What? Where?" said the giant, stamping about as if the floor were red hot.

Tom gave him a straight look up and down and said he:

"You take off those kettle lids so that he can see you are not afraid of him, then ask him to dinner like a grand, wonderful, hospitable Irishman and you'll have as pleasant an evening as I have just passed with him."

Well, the giant thought that Tom had been given this message from the other giant and he was glad enough to make peace, once he was certain the other giant meant no harm. He sent Tom away with a

cake and an apple and a flute whose music made any one dance.

Off went Tom to the third giant. His castle had all the windows shut up, and inside the giant sat in darkness. Now Tom was much too proud of his goatskin to be groping about with no one able to see it and the first thing he did was to open the window and whom should they see but the two giants coming along? Well, then there was a terrible hullabaloo, if you like.

"They'll see me, they'll see me," roared the giant.

"Yes, but if we hadn't opened the window, we would not have seen them," said Tom. "What sort of a dinner would you have been able to set before them then? Now you can prepare a feast that is worthy of a grand, wonderful, hospitable Irishman."

"Why, they don't come as friends!" cried the giant.

"Look at the friendly way they've got their arms tucked in each other's," said Tom, pointing through the window.

Well, the giant obeyed Tom's directions, because he had got out of the way of thinking for himself.

and before Tom left, the castle was smelling with fine soup and pastry and chocolate and if Tom hadn't wanted to get back to his mother, it would have broken his heart to go.

The giant gave Tom a fine pot of ointment with which he could rub himself over and then nothing that touched or struck him could hurt him. As Tom went away, he met the two giants hurrying along, snuffing the good smells that were coming from the castle, and by the look on their faces Tom saw the three of them would have a jolly evening, feasting and exchanging stories, instead of hiding from each other and heaving stones round the corner whenever anybody's head peeped out.

When Tom got to the village, he told the people the giants were too busy making friends with each other to trouble them and on he went to his mother, well pleased with his first day in the world.

Soon after this, the news came to the village that the King of Dublin wanted nothing so much in the world as to see his daughter laugh three times. After Tom's success with the giants, every one was wishful to do a good turn to him and they came up to tell him about it. Tom was ready enough to

go, for he wished to see Dublin, and the villagers offered to lend him a coat and a kilt so that he would go decently. But Tom said he had come into the world in a goatskin and he would go to Dublin in it and take nothing but what belonged to him, namely, the club, the flute, and the ointment he had got from the giants.

So off Tom went to Dublin. All the fine folk at the castle made fun of Tom when he appeared and refused to let him come before the Princess, but Tom laid hold of his club and swung it this way and that so cleverly that he did no more harm than knock off one man's bonnet and another man's crown. He got right among the dukes and earls with his club and they looked so comical with their crowns toppling and tumbling and themselves putting up their hands to save them, that the Princess, who was looking down from the castle wall, let out a great laugh.

When the King saw what a great, strong fellow Tom was, he wondered if he could conquer a fierce wolf which lived near the castle. Tom went off as cheerful as if he had been going to visit his mother and came back into the court-yard with the wolf

And as the princess looked at him, she laughed for the third time.

trotting behind him as meek as a lamb. Then Tom pulled out his flute and that terrible wolf fell to dancing and frolicking so that the Princess laughed until she cried.

Then said the King, "I am wishful for the Danes to be driven out of Ireland." And Tom managed to do that by getting an iron flail. He made this red-hot, rubbed his hands with the ointment and picked up the flail and carried it into the court-yard. But when the people saw Tom coming carrying the red-hot flail, they were terrified indeed and the Danes got news of it and when they met Brian Boru at Clontarf (just look on the map, and see how near that is to Dublin) they had no heart for battle and got into their ships as quickly as they could. But one of the courtiers who was jealous of Tom's success said he did not believe the flail was really hot.

Of course he burnt himself till he howled. Then Tom ran to him and took the man's hands in his, all covered with the ointment, so that he might heal him, and danced him about so that the man's face had the funniest look. And as the Princess looked at him she let out a great laugh for the third time.

The King was mighty pleased, for he saw his daughter had learned the laughing habit and would be cheerful company now for him and for every one. Tom seemed such a useful fellow to have about the court that the King asked if he would like to stay. Tom said yes, if the King would send a wagon for his mother and bring her comfortably and settle her in a little cottage where they could have a neighbour in to crack a joke, and a bit of land where they could grow their praties. The King was pleased enough to do this, and so that is how Tom and his mother came to settle in Dublin.

THE TALKATIVE SPARROW

A Tale of Japan

A SPARROW sat in the peach tree belonging to the home of an old fisherman and his wife. It was no ordinary sparrow; that was plain to see from the noise it was making. Cirrup, shirrup, chirrup, said the sparrow, over and over again, as if it had really too many things it wanted to say and so could only splutter and chatter them all out together. But it sounded a very happy little sparrow, and when the fisherman's wife set down a bowl of smoking rice starch on the step, the sparrow's chatter almost turned into a song.

"All that for me? How exceedingly kind of her! Kimiko is not usually so generous. I must eat it up while it is hot. That will show I appreciate her kindness. Yes, yes, Kimiko has a good heart after all." So saying, the sparrow flew down onto the

step and though the bowl held a great deal more than it could comfortably hold, it did not pause until it had eaten so much that it was as round as a ball. Then the sparrow hopped onto the lowest bough of the peach tree and tried to say all the nice things it was thinking about Kimiko. Just then, the household cat strolled round the corner and lay down on the step for a little snooze. The cat and the sparrow were good friends, for the sparrow was the favourite pet of the old fisherman and flew in and out of the house whenever it pleased.

"Never still," said the cat lazily, as it watched the sparrow fluffing out its feathers. "Do you never grow weary of chattering?"

"Oh, my friend," said the sparrow, delighted to have a listener, "I cannot begin to say all that is in my heart. I would give anything to have the gift of human language so that I might tell my dear friend Choga, the fisherman, how much I love him, and this morning even Kimiko has been kind to me. She actually set out that large bowl of rice starch for me. Was it not kind? Is it any wonder that my heart is full to bursting?"

"No, I do not wonder at all if you put away all

that bowlful," said the cat. "The only thing I do wonder at, is that you haven't burst."

"Oh, my friend, it is wonderful what one can do for the sake of friendship," puffed the fat little sparrow. "I would not leave a drop, lest Kimiko should have thought I did not enjoy it. Now she will see how I appreciated it. Ah, here the good woman comes. Let me tell her, let me tell her," and the sparrow set up such a chattering that the cat rose and yawned, for it was impossible to so much as think of sleeping when a sparrow was trying to say *all* it felt.

But Kimiko, it seemed, had something to say as well. Directly she saw the empty bowl she gave a tremendous squeal, and then if she did not rush at the cat with her straw sandal, screaming, "You wicked thief! There you have gone and stolen all my beautiful starch."

"No, no," cried the well-meaning sparrow, fluttering down in a terrible state, "the cat did not touch it, Kimiko. I thought you had placed it there for me, though I had no reason to look for such a generous act from you, I confess, but—"

"Oh, get out of my way; you are always under

my feet," cried Kimiko, as the sparrow hopped and fluttered round her, and, taking hold of it, she drew out her scissors and snipped off the tip of its busy little tongue. "There, now perhaps you will not make such a noise," cried Kimiko, who was very annoyed at having lost the starch with which she was going to stiffen her husband's clean clothes.

But judge of her surprise when the sparrow spoke in a human voice. "What has happened?" gasped the sparrow. "Is it possible you have given me my heart's desire? Yes; I can utter words; my tongue is no longer in the way."

"Oh, it is bewitched," cried Kimiko, and flung the sparrow from her so that the poor little creature found itself on the ground.

"Oh, Kimiko, Kimiko," cried the sparrow, "you are still as ugly as I thought you. How my heart bleeds for your husband. But I will not stay where I am thought to be bewitched. It is you who are bewitched, my poor Kimiko. When you lose your ugly thoughts that suspect every one of harming you, I will return. Good-bye, my poor Kimiko. Give my dear love to Choga and tell him why I have left him."

With these words the well-meaning sparrow fluttered away, and Kimiko was left to boil her rice starch.

Kimiko was preparing Choga's clothes for the festival of the Peach-blossoming. Together they were going to walk beneath the flowering trees, and they must naturally be as clean and fresh as the beautiful pink and white blossoms. But now Kimiko had to hurry and the clothes were not as crisp as they should have been, and when Choga returned there was scarcely time to eat their soup, and change. She did not say a word about the sparrow's message, even when Choga remarked how quiet the house was and wondered where his little friend had gone to. It was not until they were returning home late that night that Kimiko, who had been growing more and more uneasy, tried to explain what had happened.

But when Choga heard that she had actually cut off the tip of the tongue of his beloved sparrow, for what after all had been a very natural mistake, his grief knew no bounds.

"Why, Kimiko," said he, "my sparrow had complimented you in thinking you more generous and

thoughtful than you really are. How unkind to punish the well-meaning creature! Now I must go and seek for it, for it may even have difficulty now in eating."

"I should think it would, and for some days, too, after gorging itself with that huge bowl of starch," cried Kimiko, who was still angry with the sparrow.

"Oh, Kimiko, I beg of you to become more compassionate," said her husband sadly, and turned away from their home and went towards the dark forest, for there were many trees there, and the sparrow sometimes hopped away into them and remained there for days together.

But though Choga called his little friend again and again, no answering chirp met his ear. Presently he found himself in a long paved avenue, gently rising between great trees, then he came to fifty steps and climbed up and up until he came out onto a great terrace. Here was the tiniest little house; it was entirely made of thick white paper, and as it was lit up, the shadows of the inmates could be plainly seen as they moved about the rooms. How great was Choga's surprise to see that they were sparrows. He went up and tapped on the side of

the house; instantly, the screen slid open and there was his dear little friend, clad in a gorgeous kimono and crying out, "Welcome, dear Choga, welcome thrice welcome, to my little home. How often have I tried to tell you about it, and to invite you to visit us. But now you have found the way to us and I can present you to my wife and daughters who long to make your acquaintance, for I have told them of your kindness and goodness, and they hope to become as good friends with you as I am."

So saying, the side of the house opened, and Choga was just able to get inside. Then he knelt down on a soft cushion, while the sparrow's family hurried to bow and welcome him. They laid delicious refreshments before him, sugar jelly, rock candy, sweet potato custard, and rice starch, sprinkled with sugar and flavoured with orange-flower water; there were little comfits too, with every kind of seed you can imagine, inside them.

Choga sat and ate and very much enjoyed his supper, for the festival had been a long one, and his walk through the forest had given him a good appetite; he was delighted too, to sit with his little pet and see how comfortable and dainty his home

and wife and children were. The little sparrows were most clever. The three little daughters could play on the samisen, and sing very prettily, and as the sparrow explained all their chirps, Choga could enjoy the story they were telling. After supper, they pushed away the little table and then the sparrow took the samisen and cried, "I am now going to entertain you, my honoured friend, while my family dance and disport themselves, to explain the meaning of my words."

Oh, what a merry performance then took place: the little sparrows hopped about, one like a crab and one like a monkey until Choga laughed out loud, while the sparrow sang the following funny tale:

"A pink-faced monkey and a yellow-backed crab once played on a sandhill together. Presently the monkey found a persimmon seed, but the crab, digging and delving with its great claws, came upon a whole rice dumpling, and coming up to the crab, he held out the persimmon seed persuasively.

"'Dear friend,' said the pink-faced monkey, 'behold what I have found. If you plant this seed it will grow into a great tree, and bear persimmons forever and ever so that you will be well fed all

your days. I should like to give you this seed because you are my friend and I love you.'

"'How extremely kind,' said the yellow-backed crab. 'I have only found this rice dumpling which will be ended when eaten. Yet, if you care to accept it, I shall be highly gratified.'

"You may be sure the monkey gobbled up the rice dumpling quickly enough and the crab dug a hole for the persimmon seed gratefully. Hear now, the story of the patience of the crab. Day after day he watered the seed, and loosened the earth with his great claws, and took away the stones, until a persimmon tree shot up stout and tall, and at last green persimmons appeared, and ripened. Then the crab looked up at his tree and beheld no less than five persimmons, his first crop. But how to get them down again? Then thought the crab of the pink-faced monkey and hurried to find him.

"'Come and help me gather my fruit,' cried the crab. 'Willingly, will I share them if you will only climb the tree for me and gather them.'

"Quickly the pink-faced monkey hurried to obey the crab.

"But, oh and oh, hear now the greed of the

monkey. When he had climbed the tree and picked the persimmons, he put each one into his cheek, and when the crab begged him to throw down two, the pink-faced monkey only jeered and cried, 'For those who have the skill to climb a tree, the fruit must be.'

"Hear now the cunning of the crab!

"'Skill indeed you have,' said the crab, 'but there are some things you cannot do, for all your boasting.'

"'Anything a monkey can do, I can do,' cried the pink-faced monkey from his lofty perch. The five persimmons were now all safely stored away in the monkey's cheeks. And the crab said, 'Oh, pink-face, you cannot descend the tree head downwards.'

"At this, the monkey threw himself down and began to descend head foremost.

"'Behold me!' cried the monkey. And as he opened his mouth, of course all the persimmons dropped out and the crab seized them and scuttered away to his hole. Yet do I rejoice to tell that the crab left three for the monkey, his promised share, for the noble must never descend to the level of the base, and he who keeps his word, helps the trickster."

Choga was delighted to hear such fine sentiments

from the little sparrow who seemed to become more dignified and honourable every minute, and rose to make his good-byes, saying once more how sorry he was Kimiko had lost her temper so rudely.

But the sparrow waved its wing courteously and answered, "Kimiko with her scissors has made me able to be a better friend to you and her; let us not reproach her. We have to forgive all injuries and no injury can harm those who bear no resentment. Forgiving blesses the one who forgives."

So saying, the sparrow signalled to his family who entered, bearing two boxes which they set down before Choga.

"Here is a farewell gift," said the sparrow. "Many a gift have you bestowed on me, Choga, and I would like you to carry something home as a token of this visit, although I cannot return to you until Kimiko has changed her thoughts. The more kindness we can show to her, however, the quicker will she do this, so pray take one of these boxes to her, and tell her I have sent it for you both in exchange for the rice starch of which, I inadvertently deprived her." Now one of the boxes was small and one was very large; Choga chose the small

one because he did not wish to impose on the sparrow's hospitality. Then off he went, all the sparrows fluttering beside him to the top of the steps, bidding him good-bye, and saying how much they had enjoyed his company.

When he came home, Kimiko was waiting up, and inclined to be angry, but when the box was opened, they saw it was full of gold and jewels, enough to support them for the rest of their lives.

Now grateful indeed was Choga to the well-meaning sparrow, but Kimiko did not seem wholly pleased, and went to bed rather silent. Presently, Choga felt some one wake him up, and there was Kimiko.

"I cannot help thinking how stupid you were not to take the large box," said she. "Wake up and dress and go right back to the sparrow, and say Kimiko would prefer the large one."

"No, indeed," said Choga. "If you want the large box, you must go yourself for it. I am very well satisfied with the gift the sparrow has made to us and I shall keep it and be grateful."

Well, Kimiko bothered and begged and cried, but Choga would not budge, so when the morning

dawned Kimiko got up and went herself to seek the sparrow.

Kind was the welcome she received, for the sparrows thought Kimiko had come to say she was sorry, and hastened to lay a fine feast before her. But when the sparrow took up the samisen to sing, Kimiko stopped him hastily and said she must now be going back to her home. "I will just take the large box my husband left behind him," said Kimiko, and thus let out the reason of her visit.

The sparrows said nothing, but politely brought in the large box, and Kimiko went away, so pleased at having it, she even forgot to thank them. But the large box was terribly heavy and the steps were long. When Kimiko reached the bottom step she sat down to rest and as the box was beside her thought she would cheer herself up by looking at its contents. So she opened the lid; but instead of gold and jewels there was nothing inside but pebbles.

So angry was Kimiko, she did not know what to do.

Just then, whom should she see coming but Choga, who was afraid she would find the way long and tiring without him.

When Kimiko saw her husband coming, suddenly she was touched by his kindness, and then she thought of the sparrow's kindness to both of them, and her hard heart melted and she burst into tears.

"How ungrateful I have been," she sobbed. "Not only to the sparrow, honourable husband, but to you who bear so kindly with my ugly temper. I should have respected and welcomed the sparrow if only that he was your honourable friend."

Then Choga dried her tears and assured her that he would rather have Kimiko repentant than twenty boxes full of gold.

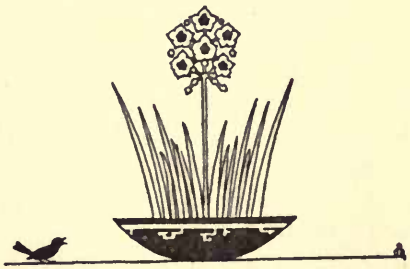
"Besides we have more than we can possibly use," said he, as they walked home together. "Our wants are simple and I do not intend to grow idle."

"I care nothing for the gold and jewels," said Kimiko. "The only thing I want is to see you happy and your little friend the sparrow hopping about the house again. Ever since it went, the place has seemed as silent as the tomb."

Judge then of Kimiko and Choga's joy, when, on coming in sight of the peach tree, they heard the

well-known notes of the sparrow crying out, "Welcome home!"

Yes! He had returned to his dear friend Choga, and ever afterwards shared his days equally between his family home and the fisherman's hut.



CAP O' RUSHES

A Tale of England

ONCE upon a time there was a gentleman who lived in Sussex; he had three daughters, Mary, Elisabeth, and Rose. They were good girls, and fond of their needle, but for every three stitches Rose put into her work, her sisters put one. Mary played on the spinet and Elisabeth was a wonderful singer and knew so many ballads that no one had ever been able to count them: but Rose, she just sat there embroidering a muslin gown with a posy of every flower in the garden, for when she was not sewing, Rose dearly loved to prune and water and snip her flowers and she was wishful to finish the gown for the Harvest Home when her father made a grand feast and invited all the neighbours. As the summer waned, the sisters had to prepare for the feast, and Mary made pastries and sweetmeats, and Elisabeth made cakes and comfits, but they had to call for Rose to cut out the gold leaf and fruit paste,

and make pretty knots and flowers on their goodies; and when it was time to go out into the meadows and gather boughs and garlands, for the hall, Rose was the one to weave them together, and Rose it was who pulled the bays and rosemary to strew in the chambers and guest-rooms. She was up betimes, but with here a stitch and there a stitch, her gown was finished.

And so the Harvest came. The sheaves were carried, and the grain was garnered and the hay was stacked: the garrets were full of fruit and roots, and the great hall thronged with guests and servants, when the gentleman called to his three daughters and bade them make merry with the company. Mary played on the spinet and Elisabeth danced till every one's eyes were round as O, and then the gentleman told his daughters to stand forth before the company. They came up to the dais where he sat, accordingly; Mary and Elisabeth in their fine satin gowns, one pink as a peach, one pale as a lily, and Rose in her white lawn, which her fingers had enriched with dainty stitches, and it would be hard to say which looked the prettiest.

But when their father beheld Rose's simple gown,

his brow darkened, for she did not look as handsomely clothed as the others.

"Now," said the gentleman, "my barns are full, and my garrets and cellars; but here stand the treasures I value most dearly, and to show you all what good affectionate girls these be, I will ask you, dear Mary, how much you love me?"

"Better than my life," said Mary as pink as a peach.

"Why, that is a good answer," said the gentleman. "And how much do you love me, dear Elisabeth?"

"Better than the whole world," said Elisabeth, as pale as a lily.

"Why, that is a famous answer," said the gentleman, and then he turned to Rose in her simple muslin gown that her clever fingers had made pretty, and said, "And how much do you love me, dear Rose?"

But instead of the fine answer he expected, "Better than fresh meat loves salt," said Rose, and blushed as red as her namesake.

At this answer every one in the hall burst out laughing, for it was so different from anything they

thought she would say, and she looked such a shy, blushing, little maid.

"What!" cried the gentleman, "you would shame me before my neighbours and friends? If you love me no better than that, get out of my house, for I'll call you no daughter of mine."

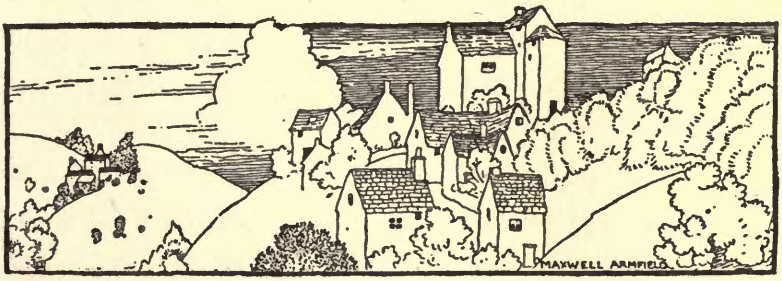
Now maybe, if Rose had stayed quiet till the morning, he would have forgiven her, but Rose always said what she meant, no more and no less, and took it that every one else did the same.

Out she went, therefore, just as she was, while the rest of the company feasted, and ran along the high-road, not knowing where to go or what to do with herself, now she was turned out in the twinkling of a jiffey, from her home.

She walked up hill, and through dale, until clouds gathered and big drops of rain began to fall, and there she was in her fine lawn gown and nothing to cover it.

But beside the road, ran a stream where rushes were growing, and Rose stooped down and gathered a lapfull, and soon wove a fine cap to cover her hair and a cloak to cover her gown. Her pretty face peeped out from under a thatch of rushes so that

she looked as if she was walking about in a little hut. Her curly brown hair was covered up, and no one would have guessed this queer figure was a rich gentleman's daughter. But she was safe from the rain and wind, and the rushes made a pleasant shivery noise as she ran along, and now she was all covered up like this, she did not feel so shy.



A great house standing back from the road with high yew hedges all around it.

Presently she saw a great house standing back from the road with high yew hedges all round it, and she crept along by the hedge till she found a lowly gate, on which was written, "Servants' Entrance." Rose went in here, and knocked at the kitchen door.

How the servants laughed when they saw her standing there in her cap o' rushes.

"But, I haven't anywhere to go," said she, "and I ask no wages, and I can do all the work that no one else likes doing if you will let me come in and give me a roof over my head and a bite and sup now and then."

"What are you dressed out like that for?" said the cook, as well as she could for laughing.

"So that I can do the dirty work," said Rose. "I've no fear of messing these clothes, and when they wear out I can fetch a-plenty more from the river."

"It would be nice to have her clean the pots," said the cook, and another maid said, "And to rake out the ashes," and another said, "And to polish the pewter," so they told her to come in.

She would give no name so they called her Cap o' Rushes, and after they were tired of teasing her, she settled down comfortably enough, for they gave her a tiny room under the stairs with a cupboard in the wall where she laid by her fine muslin gown, unseen of any one, and the kitchen window overlooked the herb patch, and a thousand sweet scents came in to cheer her as she rubbed the pots and pans. What a sight of them there were, blue and brown and

red and russet, of good Sussex earth and glazed with as rich and ripe a colour; there were jugs with posies of flowers on them, and fine big mugs for the maids and men to drink out of, and Cap o' Rushes took pride and pleasure in the pots on the dresser and the pans on the wall. She scrubbed the lids of the pans till they shone like mirrors and all the maids could see their faces in them, and she cleaned the bricks till they looked as fresh as wet fishes; and she kept the hearthstones red and cleaned out the oven after every baking; and when the cap and the cloak of rushes grew soiled, she would run to the stream for a bath and come back in fresh rushes. But she would never say a word about who she was or where she came from.

One day there came news that a grand ball was to be given at a big house nearby, and the servants had permission to go across the downs, and slip in to the gallery where the minstrels played and have a sight of the grand doings. They were all busy, using the saucepan lids for mirrors, and tying on ribbons and fixing posies on their bodices, until the kitchen looked like a bed of flowers; the only servant who did not dress up was Cap o' Rushes, and she

slipped away to her little room and the servants thought she was tired and went off without her.

But Cap o' Rushes was washing herself and plaiting her hair; and when the house was quiet and not so much as the cat was left (for the cook had carried it under her arm to see the sights), Cap o' Rushes took out her beautiful gown and slipped into it. Then she put on her cap and cloak of rushes and ran over the down in the dusk, and if any one saw her, he thought her an old woman maybe. When she reached the big house, the lights were shining in the windows, and the music was playing sweet and lively, and Cap o' Rushes flung off cap and cloak and laid them under a mulberry tree beside the kitchen door.

There was not a soul about for all were watching the dancers, but when Cap o' Rushes was looking for the staircase to the servants' gallery, who should come by but a fine young man, no other than her Master's son. He took her for a guest, and asked her to dance with him, and the music was so sweet and lively, she could not say no. So he led Cap o' Rushes out into the ballroom and every one was surprised to see so fine a lady in so beautiful a

gown. As for the Master's son, when he danced with her and saw the pretty posies on her gown, each worked as neatly as if it were growing there, he could not say enough, and when he heard Cap o' Rushes had embroidered every stitch, he cried out at such industry and said she was surely the cleverest lady he had ever met, as well as the fairest. He was so pleased with her looks, and liked her quiet ways so well, he danced with her till the time came for the supper. In the confusion and the crowd, as all left for the supper-room, Cap o' Rushes slipped her hand from his arm, and turned through a little side door and ran out of the house; there she picked up her cap and her cloak and ran home by the light of the big red moon. She was in her own little room and fast asleep when the servants returned from the ball, full of talk of the lady in the wonderful gown, patterned with a hundred posies, whom the Master's son had danced with and whose name none knew.

When they came down in the morning, Cap o' Rushes was scrubbing the pails, and had to listen to their chatter, for of course they thought she knew nothing about the ball.

"You did miss a sight, Cap o' Rushes," said they.

"The sweetest lady in the world was there, with a gown that took all eyes. Would I were a lady like her, with nothing to do."

"Something to do is better than nothing to do, to my thinking," said Cap o' Rushes, splashing her pails till they shone like dew.

"Ah, but Cap o' Rushes, as she danced, the sweetest scents floated out of the flowers on her gown, till one would say one was in a garden."

"Sweet smells come out of clean saucepans," said Cap o' Rushes, "when sweet herbs go into them."

"What, Cap o' Rushes, do you think yourself as good as she?" said they.

"I'm as satisfied to be me as she is to be she," said Cap o' Rushes and that was all they could get out of her.

Next week there was another ball, and all the servants went off to see it, but Cap o' Rushes stayed behind. Then she washed herself and plaited her hair and put on her fine lawn gown and covered herself with her cap and cloak of rushes and ran over the downs. She slipped off her cloak and cap and hid them under the mulberry tree, and then she walked in as bold as anything to the dancing-hall.

The Master's son was there looking out for her, and directly she appeared, he came to her, and they danced together again.

"I've been thinking of those pretty posies on your gown ever since I saw you," said he. "Why, there seem more flowers than I can count. It would take a whole evening to look at each one, and each is prettier than the other."

So they danced together all evening and talked of the flowers and she told him the names; pansy and lily and daffydowndilly; and cowslip and oxlip and daisy and violet and gilly; and carnation and rosebud and ever so many more. She had put a posy of lavender on one sleeve and a posy of rosemary on the other, and she had put a posy of moss rosebuds over her heart. It was plain she loved every flower and herb in the garden and the Master's son said he had long been looking for a maid of simple tastes.

But when they were all trooping into supper, she let go of his arm and lagged behind and slipped out of the side door, and picked up her cap and cloak of rushes and ran away home.

She was safe in her bed and asleep when the servants came back, and when they came down next

morning, there she was, rinsing her milkpails, as fresh as a lark.

"Oh, Cap o' Rushes, you did miss something last night," they cried.

"What was that?" said Cap o' Rushes.

"The lady was there again, and looking better than ever. One couldn't see how pretty her gown was in one evening; I wish I were a fine lady and had gowns with posies worked on them."

"Any one can make posies on her gown," said Cap o' Rushes, "as long as she has fingers."

"Not like that," cried the servants. "I wish I could lie a-bed all day and dance all night as ladies do."

"I lie a-bed all night and dance all day," said Cap o' Rushes, and as they cried out, "*You* dance all day?" she said, "Some dance with their toes and same dance with their fingers," and truly, the way Cap o' Rushes was polishing the pails made her fingers dance right deftly.

"You still think yourself as good as she, then," said the servants, and Cap o' Rushes said what she had said before: "I'm as satisfied with me as she is with she."

Next week there was another ball, and again the servants trooped off in good time, eager to see the fine lady, and again Cap o' Rushes stayed behind till they had gone, then washed herself and plaited her hair and put on her gown with the posies; she covered herself up with the cap and and cloak of rushes and ran all the way there, and slipped them off and put them under the mulberry tree, and then she marched into the dancing-hall and there was the Master's son standing at the door, waiting for her.

This time, as he danced with her, he told her he had found out something about her.

"What is that?" said Cap o' Rushes.

"You're faithful," said the Master's son, "and you have good sense," said he, "and whom you love, you love truly."

"How did you find that out?" said Cap o' Rushes.

"You're faithful to your pretty gown," said the Master's son, "the other ladies change their fine clothes for every ball, and are not content to wear the same gown twice; but you have worn yours three times. That shows good sense, for the more I look at it, the more I

like it; and it shows you love truly, that you do not grow tired of the pretty posies you have worked with such patience; and so we can have the pleasure of looking at them again and again."

"Those are good reasons," said Cap o' Rushes sweetly, "but nobody ever grows tired of flowers, so I do not see why it is any great thing not to grow tired of their pictures."

"I wish I had a picture of you," said the Master's son. "Will you never tell me your name?"

Cap o' Rushes just shook her head and looked very sweet.

"Well, here is a ring," said the Master's son. "Will you take it?"

"Yes," said Cap o' Rushes, and pulled a sprig of rosemary from her hair and gave it to him in exchange.

"Now you will not run away from me to-night," said the Master's son, but Cap o' Rushes did not say yes or no, and when every one trooped into supper, she let go his arm, lagged behind, slipped out of the little door and put on her cap and cloak from under the mulberry tree. But the Master's son was quicker to-night, and she had hardly put on her cap and

cloak of rushes, when he was out of the side door looking for her.

Cap o' Rushes slipped round the mulberry tree and bent nearly double; then she hobbled away across the downs and the Master's son passed her and never noticed her, so full were his thoughts of the fine lady in her posy gown. When he was out of sight, Cap o' Rushes ran faster than the wind and was safe in her little room and in bed when the servants returned.

Next morning they found her polishing the sauce-pan lids as fresh as a daisy, and said they to her, "Oh, Cap o' Rushes, you did miss something last night, and you'll miss it now for ever, for the dances are over and you'll never have a chance to see the fine lady. When she went out of the room, it was as if the sun had gone out. I wish I were a fine lady to be missed like that."

"Ah, you'd miss me if I were to go," said Cap o' Rushes, becoming a little more saucy, now she heard how well every one spoke of her.

"How do you mean?" said they.

"Your pans wouldn't shine as they do now," said Cap o' Rushes. "'Tis as if the sun has gone out of

the kitchen when I take them down from the wall."

Well, they all told Cap o' Rushes she was no match for the fine lady, but Cap o' Rushes said again, "I am as satisfied with me as she is with she," and as there was no contradicting her, they had to leave it at that.

But that evening, the cook came down in a fluster and said, "Oh, Cap o' Rushes, I want your cleanest saucepan."

"Why, supper is over," said Cap o' Rushes, very surprised.

"But Master's son has come back from searching the woods and downs for the fine lady," said the cook, "and sore at heart and heavy of heart he is because he cannot find her, so his mother has sent down to ask for some good hot gruel."

"Let me make it," said Cap o' Rushes. "Gruel needs a sight of stirring and you have been cooking all day."

"There's no one who stirs more carefully than you," said the cook. "I'll be glad for you to do it while I eat my own supper."

So Cap o' Rushes made the gruel, and poured it

into a porringer, and then she dropped a slip of rosemary therein to give it flavour, and weighted it down with the ring the Master's son had given her the night before at the ball.

Then she slipped into her little room and put on her fine gown with the posies, and then she put her cap and cloak of rushes over it and went back to the kitchen looking just the same. Presently down came one of the maids, saying the Master's son wanted to see the cook. Dear, but she was frightened.

"You must have let the gruel burn," said she, and was in a dreadful state, not wishing to get Cap o' Rushes into trouble, and yet not liking to take the blame on herself, for she was a good cook and proud of her cooking.

But when she got upstairs the Master's son was pacing up and down the dining-room for all he had come home so tired, and directly he saw the cook, he cried, "Who made that gruel?"

"'Twas I," said the cook, in a terrible fluster.

"'Twas not," said the Master's son. "Say who it was and you shall have this purse of gold."

"It was Cap o' Rushes," said the cook.

"Who's Cap o' Rushes?" cried the Master's son.

"I don't rightly know," said the cook, "but she's down in the kitchen." At that, up jumped the Master's son and went down the stair quicker than the cook could follow him.

"Where's Cap o' Rushes?" said he, and there she was, scrubbing the saucepan the gruel had been made in.

"Here," said Cap o' Rushes, though she had no need to say it for all could see at once who wore such a cap.

"Where did you get this ring?" cried the Master's son, showing it.

"From him who gave it me," said Cap o' Rushes, looking at him very steadily. When he saw her pretty face peeping out of the rushes, he began to guess, and as all the servants were standing round with their eyes popping out of their heads, Cap o' Rushes threw back her cap and cloak, and there she was in the pretty gown covered with posies.

How every one marvelled at seeing her among them like that, and the Master's son led her upstairs to his mother who was very kind to her and said Cap o' Rushes would make a fine wife.

So a marriage was quickly called for, and a great feast ordered, for which invitations were sent far and near, even to Cap o' Rushes' father. But she did not say a word about who she was. On the day before the feast, she went down to the kitchen, and said to the cook, "I want you to dress all the dishes without salt."

"Not a pinch?" said the cook, very surprised.

"Not the least little grain," said Cap o' Rushes.

"Why, that will make everything taste very nasty," said the cook. "Everything will taste of nothing at all."

"That doesn't signify," said Cap o' Rushes.

"Please yourself," said the cook, and prepared the wedding dinner without any salt.

Well, after they were married, the feast began, and first one dish was passed and then another, but a nastier, queerer meal no one had ever tasted.

"Why, there's no salt," said the Master's wife, and the Master said, "There's nothing fit to eat."

But at this Cap o' Rushes looked at her father. He had been served with one dish and then another, and another, and now he pushed them all away and

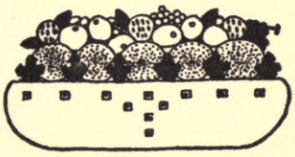
burst out sobbing. Every one asked what was the matter and he cried: "I once had a daughter and asked her how much she loved me and she said, "As much as fresh meat loves salt," so I thought she did not love me at all and turned her out of my house. Now she has vanished from my sight for ever and great harm may have come to her, and I know she loved me best of them all."

"Indeed she did," said Cap o' Rushes, and threw back her wedding veil so that her father could see her, and there was his own dear daughter. What is more, there she was in the gown with the posies which he had despised, for she had vowed and declared she would be married in no other.

Then there was great rejoicing, and the cook came forward and asked permission to serve them another dinner. "For," said she, "I have prepared one all ready, for I knew fresh meat would be nothing without salt."

There was more rejoicing at this, and all went without a single hitch. Nor did Cap o' Rushes stay out of the kitchen after she married, but ruled well and wisely over the great house, and taught the maids to work posies on their gowns, and next time

there was a ball, every one danced together and there was no peeping from corners. "For," said Cap o' Rushes, "one cannot have too many to share a good thing."



HOW OPPORTUNITY CAME

A Tale of Korea

TWO Korean schoolboys, Whang and Yoo, were talking about opportunity. Said Whang, "I shall not wait for opportunity to come to me. Wherever I go, I intend to display my talents so that all will notice me and then I shall be certain of promotion and success."

"In the Book of Sages, it is written that opportunity comes when we least expect it," said Yoo. "If you are forever seeking notice, it seems to me you are forever hunting after opportunity, and then, so the Book of Sages tells us, opportunity never shows herself."

"Not at all," said Whang. "I shall never lose an opportunity of displaying my cleverness which as you know, is remarkable."

Now this was perfectly true; Whang was a good

scholar and had great talent, but so had Yoo. Whang was a great reader and loved to think deeply and find out the reason of everything, where Yoo was clever at stringing words together making jokes. But the dispositions of the two boys seemed opposed to their talents. Whang, the thinker, was fond of public parties and assemblies where he could air his learning; and Yoo was a quiet fellow, content to do his tasks and never seeking to be noticed. They were very good friends, however, and were now leaving school and going to college. But when the time came to leave, they did not travel together. Yoo went straight there in his father's country cart, but Whang preferred to walk there so that he might mingle with the people on the road, and talk with the strangers in the wayside pavilions or rest-houses. In the course of his journey Whang found himself in one of these and amused himself by reading the poems that were written on scrolls and hung on the walls for the refreshment and entertainment of the passersby.

As he stood there with his hands behind his back, an old man entered and presently Whang cast a patronising remark at him.

"Well, granddad, can you appreciate the flavour of verses such as these?"

The old man rose humbly from the mat, on being addressed, and said, "How can you expect an old man like myself to know anything? Will you not tell me the meaning?"

Then said Whang, "These verses were written by the great men of the past. What they saw and experienced, they wrote down to inspire us. They made pictures of sea and land, for there are living pictures in poetry."

The old man expressed his admiration for Whang's cleverness and condescension, but at that moment up came a train of pack-horses with servants and retainers, bearing tent-poles and canvas packs in a great procession. Whang was delighted to see this great audience, and hurried to the gates to meet them but though they halted, no one came in and he asked why they were standing there. In this, they told him, they were waiting for the great minister, the most learned man in all Korea, Maing-Sa-song, who was resting therein. Overcome with dismay at his impertinent conceit, Whang dropped on his knees before the old man, who laughed and

said, "That will do. There is no difference in the worth of men; they are high or low, according to the thoughts that prompt them, but alas, we have all been born with a proud heart. You have shown you are a good scholar; why should you be so proud then and so humble now?"

With this the minister took him by the hand and led him to his mat and comforted him.

But when Whang arrived at college and met his friend Yoo, he could not cease from deploring his lost opportunity.

"Had I only known who he was, I could have impressed him with my wisdom," wailed Whang, "but as it was, he merely saw me as an impertinent boy and condescended to me."

"Ah, well, opportunity is ever knocking at the door," said Yoo. "Even now you have an opportunity to show wisdom, by thinking no more about something that cannot be mended. If you had only been content to be yourself, however, and had not been seeking to impress every one you met, Maing-Sa-song would have gotten into conversation with you and would then have soon found out your learning. We are always known for what we are, be sure of that."

When they had been there a year, a picnic was arranged at which many people of importance would be present, and Whang was greatly excited at the thought of the fine opportunity this would be to make himself conspicuous. His year of college had taught him much and he hoped some high official would observe his gifts and give him a good position. But when the day came, Yoo noticed that all the students of the college, and masters and the servants were getting ready, and found that no one was to be left at home. Now in the college was a sacred temple, and Yoo did not feel it was right to leave it with no one in charge; therefore, without saying a word to any one, for he did not wish to be a meddler or spoil sport, he quietly stayed behind.

This very day, however, the King sent a messenger to see if the college and temple were in proper keeping, who returned to say the whole place was deserted and there was no one in charge but a raw country lad. The King sent the messenger back to bring Yoo at once, telling him to come in his everyday clothes just as he was, so as to lose no time. Then the King asked why he had stayed away from the picnic, and was pleased when Yoo said it was because he was the least important of any one and

so would be the least missed. The King then asked if Yoo knew how to write verses, and though this was the subject Yoo excelled at, he answered modestly that he only knew a very little about it. The King then gave him a line, "After the rain, the mountains weep," and told him to write a mate for it and Yoo instantly replied, "Before the wind, the grass is merry."

The King was delighted with his ready wit, and made him a graduate on the spot. Then the King gave him his diploma, flowers for his hat, and a red coat and issued a proclamation, saying Yoo had passed the examination. He then commanded Yoo to mount one of the royal palfries, and go to the picnic as a victorious candidate. How surprised Whang and every one was, when Yoo appeared, riding on horseback, with flute and harp-players escorting him, garlanded with flowers. They wondered who was the grand stranger dressed in his ceremonial robes, and then, going up to him, found it was Yoo to whom opportunity had come while he was performing the simple, lowly service of being on guard at the temple.

Soon after this, Yoo was given the post of secre-

tary at the royal palace, but in spite of Whang's cleverness, no post was found for him, even when he had graduated brilliantly. He lingered in Seoul for some time, until at last he despaired of gaining office, and sought the palace where his friend Yoo lived.

"You have proved to be right and I wrong," said Whang, "although I have gone out of my way to seek opportunity for advancement, nothing has come of it. But as you said once, we always have the opportunity of practising the virtues. Instead of railing at fate and bewailing its injustice, I have now the opportunity to show noble acceptance of the situation. I can also find many opportunities of being useful in my home village and there I shall return to-morrow, as the opportunity to gain distinction and success is plainly not coming to me. Before I go, however, I beg you to grant me my heart's desire and let me have a peep at the palace which I shall never have a chance to see again."

To this Yoo willingly agreed, and told Whang to return that evening when Yoo would show him round.

But when Whang returned that night, Yoo had

been called away and there was no one to show him anything. He waited until he found the gates of the royal enclosure had been shut for the night so he could not get out. Taking pity on Whang's plight, however, one of the other secretaries showed him a corner where he could stay concealed till morning, when he would be able to slip out unnoticed. But it was such a beautiful night, Whang could not sleep: besides now he was in the enclosure, he longed to see the palace. So presently he stole out into the court-yard; part of the wall had fallen in the heavy rains and Whang made his way through into a little park. Soon he perceived a man coming towards him, carrying a staff of carven jade, and reading a book. He asked Whang what he was doing in the grounds of the palace at such an hour, and Whang told him, without deceit or concealment. The man then began to talk with Whang and gradually drew from him the story of his search for opportunity.

"But now it cannot come to me for I leave for my little village to-morrow," said Whang sorrowfully. "Although as my friend Yoo would tell me, I shall have wonderful opportunity there of being patient and contented."

The man then asked Whang if he had studied the Book of Changes, and Whang replied that he had done so.

"Do you understand it?" said the man.

"At one time, I should have answered yes," said Whang with a mournful smile, "but now I am going away and shall have no more chance to study in a library, I realise how little I know of it, and how much there is I want to know."

At that, the man invited him to enter a summer-house that stood near, and showed Whang the Book of Changes which he was reading, and looked up a part which he found difficult. Whang explained it with convincing clearness; then the man showed Whang another part, and then another, and they read and talked all through the night till dawn. Then Whang rose and said he must be going, and the man sighed and said, "All this knowledge and to think it has never been made use of. Alas, for my country."

Whang asked if his new friend could open the gates for him, but the man said he could not, and Whang must go back to the corner where he had been hidden and wait till it was broad daylight and

the gates were thrown open when he could go in safety.

So Whang bade him good-bye and departed, and when it was daylight the gates were opened and Whang went out to his lodging. But as he passed along the street, he beheld a procession coming, wherein rode a man calling out the new proclamation the King had just issued. Whang stood by the roadside while they passed, when what should he hear but his own name. The proclamation said that the King had appointed Whang to be Overseer of Literature.

He hurried to his lodging and found it was true. All his friends were running to congratulate him and already there was a hubbub, so they said, that so great an office had been given to so obscure a person. The next day Whang heard that the officials had gathered together in the public court to protest about it, and the King had said if they were so opposed to it, Whang should not have it.

But the next day a proclamation was issued appointing Whang to a still higher office. Again the officials held a meeting and again the King said, "Very well, if you are so opposed, I'll drop the

matter." But the next day a proclamation was issued appointing Whang to the office of Vice-President of the College of Literature. Then the officials did not know what to do, for they said to each other, "If we object, the King will make him President." They made no more objections, therefore, and a great banquet was arranged to which Yoo and Whang were, of course, invited.

But how surprised was Whang to see his friend of the summerhouse at the head of the table, and to recognise in him, the King himself. Then the King produced the Book of Changes, and calling up the officials, asked them to explain the parts which he had showed to Whang.

But not one of them could make any sense of it, and at last the King told Whang to come forward and placed the book in his hands, when Whang explained every passage in so clear a way, that every one, even the officials, could understand it.

Then the King said, "This is the great Book of the Sages and any one who understands it, ought to be promoted. Why then do you object to Whang's promotion? You may as well cease objecting, for I intend to promote him more and more."

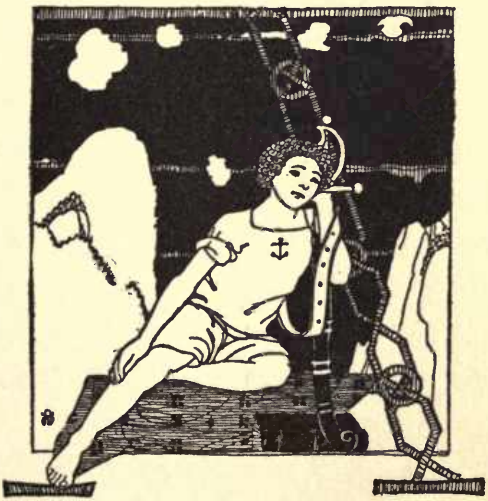
That evening, as Yoo and Whang walked home together, talking of the wonderful change in Whang's fortunes, Yoo said with joy, "Has not the Book of Sages once more been proved true? For when you sought for opportunity to advance, opportunity remained hidden, but when you gave up the quest, and determined to do your duty contentedly, and patiently, behold, opportunity hurried to show itself, and as one may say, came knocking at your door."

"And yet I envied you the opportunity that came to you," cried Whang. "How foolish I was, for I now see we are indeed known for what we are, and opportunity to show what we know will safely come to every one of us when we are humble enough to receive it. For when I sought for opportunity, I believe I was really only seeking for reward and praise, and as you have so often told me, opportunity to excel, to learn, and to practise all the virtues, is ever present."

THE LITTLE CABIN BOY

A Tale of Norway

A POOR widow and her little son found themselves alone in the world and forced to earn their living. The boy was too small to be useful to



any one but his mother; he could pick up the bits of thread from the floor when she was sewing and

find her scissors and blow the fire when the wood burned low, but he could neither read nor write and his mother dearly wished him to have a fine education like the other boys who lived nearby.

So one day she packed up her needle and thimble and all they had in the world—which was little enough—and took him by the hand and trudged away from their little cottage along the mountain road until they reached the town.

The town nestled snugly by the side of a fjord and the water ran up from the sea, deep and blue. Great ships sailed to the quay and anchored there until a forest of masts seemed to rise from the water. The widow told her little lad that these ships went all over the sea to far countries, where crimson and purple birds flew in the rigging and sweet spices and fruits grew by the shore and fine people dressed in gold and silver welcomed the sailors and brought their goods aboard in exchange for the timber of Norway.

The little lad had never seen such a wonderful sight and longed to go out on those white decks and pull at the ropes and see the white sails flapping over his head as the wind got into them and blew

the ship along to strange far places. But his mother said he first must have education and they trudged through the streets while she looked for work. At last they came to the Lord Mayor's house. He was a kind man and when she told her story he said his wife was looking for some one to embroider the house linen and mend the children's clothes. So he sent for the Lady Mayoress to see what she had to say.

Directly that good woman came into the room and saw the little lad, with his fair, shining face, as clean as a white cherry, and his little frock with the scarlet cross-stitch and his knitted socks and birch-bark shoes, she said she would be only too glad if his good mother would stay with them and help to keep the Lady Mayoress' children as neat and good-looking as her own.

"The little lad shall play with my own children and go to school with them," said the Lady Mayoress. There was the lad's education provided for, because his mother had done her best with her clever fingers and kept him a credit to her and himself.

So the widow and the little lad, whose name was

Olaf, settled down in the Lord Mayor's house and lived off the fat of the land. They worked hard, the widow at her sewing and the little lad at his schooling, for both looked forward to the time when they would have a home of their own again and knew nothing but honest work would earn it for them.

Time went on, and one day the schoolmaster came to the widow and said it was time Olaf was put to a trade. He had studied so well that he was at the top of the class. Then the Lord Mayor and the Lady Mayoress and the widow and the schoolmaster put their heads together. One said Olaf must be a parson and another said Olaf must be a lawyer, and another said he must have a stool in the Lord Mayor's countinghouse and his own mother cried out he must be a farmer up on the mountain where their own little home used to be. Suddenly, in walked Olaf and stood in the middle of them and said he was going to be a sailor and go to sea in one of those bright big ships as cabin boy.

Well, they talked this way and that way and told him of the storms and how cruel it would be for him to be parted from his mother, but Olaf would hear nothing of it. At last his own mother saw the

boy's heart was set on it and he must have his way; and so Olaf was taken to one of the ships and set aboard. He waved good-bye to his mother and off he went, never to see the town again for many and many a long day.

The ship sailed round Norway first of all, and one day when it was in one of the fjords that run far inland, with great mountains rising up on either side, news came that a great preacher had come to the town on the shore and all the crew went off to hear him the next Sunday morning. Olaf was left alone on board to clean the ship and cook the dinner against the time when the captain and the crew would be back again.

Olaf was cheerful enough, for it was the first time he had been left to take care of the big ship. Being a little lad, he liked to feel important. So he swished the decks until they were as shining as the sea, and swabbed the boatsides until, amid all his swishing and swabbing, he heard some one calling. At first he thought it was some seabird, but presently he found it was coming from an island and he could just see somebody standing and waving as if in distress. Well, the ship was clean and he had set the

pot aboil in the galley, so he thought he might as well take the ship's boat that was left and row over to lend a hand to a fellow-creature.

When he got to the island, whom should he see but an old lady, with a face as bright as an apple and hair as white as cherry blossoms! She was hopping up and down in her joy when she saw Olaf bringing his little boat across the water to her, and when he ran into shore and grounded on the firm, white sand, she ran down, saying: "Here have I been standing bawling and calling for years and no one has ever heard or heeded me but you. Row me to the other side of the fjord where my sister's house stands on yon mountain and I will repay you with my good wishes and my sister will give you something, too."

"Why, I have the dinner to get," said Olaf, "but if 'tis only to the mountain yonder, I can take you across while the pot is boiling."

The old lady was jumping into the boat before he had time to get his words out. Before he had ended, he found the boat spinning over the little dancing waves as though a breeze was wafting it.

As they went across, the old lady said: "Now, my

sister will tell you you may have anything you choose to ask for, but ask for the old tablecloth from the dresser."

"Why, that will be payment enough," said Olaf. "It will be fine to have a cloth to put on the table in the cabin and make it look like home."

The old woman said nothing, but smiled in a funny way and when they reached land, she hopped ashore and called to Olaf to run up with her. Her sister's house stood by the water's edge, so they were soon there, and out came another old woman with a face as rosy as a pear and her hair as white as hawthorn snow. She led Olaf into the kitchen, where were all manner of cakes, comfits, sausages, and nuts and apples, but he shook his head when she offered the dainties in a great basket, much as they tempted his stomach, and said, No, he would not rob her of them; he would just take the old tablecloth from the dresser.

"Food tastes all the better when a cloth is on the table," said Little Olaf, "and when the crew comes back from church, it will be good to sit down to my stew with that nice red cloth beneath our porringers."

"Well," said the second old woman, "you never thought of asking for that by yourself, but you are a good lad, so here it is." And she gave him the cloth with her blessing. Off he ran down to his boat, but who should follow but the first old woman, and now she wanted to be taken to her second sister who lived on another little island.

"But I have to think of my dinner," said Olaf.

"No harm will come to that," said the old woman. "The parson is still preaching, for you can look across and see the church door is still closed. Row me across and I will give you my good wishes and my sister will give you anything you ask for; only mind you ask for the old sword that hangs over the chest. It shuts up like a knife and you can put it in your pocket."

Well, it was plain the people were not out of church yet and the crew would not be back, so Olaf rowed her over to the island. This was covered with spruce fir, growing down to the water, and a tiny hut with a roof thatched with turf stood here. Out of it came an old lady with a face as pink as a cranberry and hair like pear-blossoms. She led Olaf into her hut, which was full of sweetmeats and

conserves in pretty glass bottles, but he would have none of the fine basketful she offered him, but said politely he would not rob her, he would but ask for the rusty old sword that hung above the chest.

"That will be of more use to me than to you," said he, "for when we go in foreign parts, I may find occasion for it."

"Well," said the second old woman, "you never thought to ask for that by yourself," but she gave it to him, and Olaf went off to his boat. Just as he was getting in, however, who should leap into it but the first old woman! And now she wanted Olaf to row her to her third sister who lived across the water the other side of the fjord, where the rocks towered up to the sky. Well, Olaf had done a good deal of rowing, but he was not a bit tired, and as there was still no sign of the captain or the crew, Olaf agreed to take her this last trip, for the old woman promised this should really be the last.

Off they went, therefore, to where the great rocks overhung the water dark and solemn, and there, out came her third sister with a face like a peach and hair like silver, from a hut upon the shore, and

begged Olaf to come in and choose whatever he liked best for payment. But as they stepped ashore the first old woman whispered: "Choose Granny's old hymn-book."

Now, when they got to the hut, Olaf did feel tempted to ask for a drink, for the hot sun had made him thirsty and the most delicious-looking cordials and homemade wines stood there. The third old woman was filling him a basket with the pretty-coloured flasks, but he said he would prefer Granny's old hymn-book. The third old woman nodded her head as if she were very pleased and said he had chosen the best gift she possessed. Then he went down to the boat and with him went the first old woman to say good-bye and tell him that the old tablecloth had but to be spread on an honest table or good earth, and it would furnish any food he needed; and the sword, if he used the black edge, would make anything topple down, and if he used the white edge would make anything stand up; and the hymns in the hymn-book, if sung by pure lips, would make any sick person well.

Then Olaf rowed back and got to the ship to find the pot boiling merrily and the little dog frisking

The Boys Who Left Trouble Behind

about and no sign yet of the captain or crew. So he just spread a bit of the tablecloth on the deck, and behold, it was covered instantly with food, and Olaf and the little dog ate every scrap and then Olaf gave the dog a gentle tap with the black edge of the sword and the dog toppled down, and he touched him with the white edge and immediately the dog jumped up. But as there was no one sick aboard he could not try the hymn-book.

Well, he stowed away all these fine gifts in his locker, except the tablecloth, which he laid on the ship's table. When the captain and the crew came back, there was the finest dinner you ever saw, waiting for them. Very pleased they were with Olaf. And then they sailed out into the great ocean to go to foreign parts.

They sailed and sailed and encountered great storms, and at last came to a strange country where spices and strange sweet flowers and fruits grew along by the water's edge. There were fine trees where monkeys and parrots screamed and frolicked. The ship drew up at a marble quay with palaces rising from it and people walking about dressed in gold and silver, just as Olaf's mother had described

to him when he was a tiny boy. But every one seemed miserable, and presently they saw a fine gentleman coming to the ship, dressed out in a floating cloak stiff with jewels and wearing a gold crown. This was the King and he ran down to the ship and cried out, "Is there any one aboard who could cure my daughter? She is sick unto death."

Every one was very sorry for him and said no, there wasn't.

But the King said, "Is there any one aboard who is not standing there on deck?" and they said, "Yes, a little cabin boy."

"Fetch him," cried the King, and the captain told Olaf to come up. But when Olaf came, he carried Granny's old hymn-book under his arm, and when the King asked if he could cure his daughter, Olaf said he thought he could.

Then the captain was so angry with what he thought was Olaf's foolish boasting that he stamped and stamped with anger, but he did not dare forbid Olaf's going, because the King was there. Olaf got off the ship and ran alongside of the King to the palace. Then the King took Olaf into the Princess's

OLAF GOT OFF THE SHIP AND RAN ALONG
SIDE THE KING TO THE PALACE

room, and there she was lying white and still, just a little girl, and Olaf opened the old hymn-book and began to sing the first hymn he clapped eyes on. By the time he had finished the first verse, the Princess opened her eyes and smiled, by the time he had finished the second, she raised her arm and yawned as if she were waking, and by the time he finished the third, she sat up and asked why every one was looking at her that way.

Great were the rejoicings when she ran down the palace steps perfectly well, and the King begged Olaf to stay with them awhile. So Olaf did. But one day some enemies of the King came to make war on him and Olaf ran amongst them with his sword and toppled them over. Then he touched them all with the white edge as they lay on the ground and up they got, very ashamed of having been so wicked and silly as to come and make war. Of course the King forgave them and as they were all away from their homes and very hungry, he wished to feed them. But there were so many he had not enough food in the city. Then Olaf took out his old tablecloth and spread it on the honest earth and there was food enough for all and

some to pack in their knapsacks and every enemy went away a friend.

The King was so pleased, he offered Olaf a ship of his very own, and a crew to sail it, and Olaf went aboard and waved good-bye to the King and Princess and all the friends he had made and set sail for the town where he had left the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress and his mother.

But he was grown such a big lad now and was dressed so fine, nobody in the town knew who it was when this great painted ship came sailing in. The Lord Mayor himself came down to the quay to ask if the noble stranger would not come to dinner with him, so Olaf marched up the street beside the Lord Mayor, with all the children and people he knew so well cheering and welcoming him. Not one knew the fine stranger was little Olaf, the cabin boy.

When he got to the Lord Mayor's house and sat down between him and the Lady Mayoress, Olaf shook out his table napkin. He saw it was embroidered with ships in the corners and well he knew who had worked it.

"Never have I seen such beautifully embroidered

napkins," said he. "Pray, may I ask to shake the hand of whomever worked this before I eat my dinner?"

"Certainly, for it was worked by the best and bravest woman in Norway," said the Lady Mayoress. "A fine woman whom we are proud to call our friend and who should be sitting at the table with us, but she was so wishful to see the dinner was served right."

"Fetch her to me," commanded Olaf like the great lord they took him for. But when they brought in his mother and he stood up and went to her, she did not wonder who he was, but ran straight to him and cried, "Why, 'tis my little Olaf come home."

Then Olaf and his mother and the Lord Mayor and the Lady Mayoress could hardly eat their dinner for talking. After dinner, Olaf took them all to his ship and took them round to the little islands and the huts and houses where the four old women lived. The little old women were glad to see him and hear of the good things their gifts had brought him. And then Olaf and his mother and the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress said good-bye, and Olaf and his

mother sailed away to go round the world and visit the King and Princess and many fine countries, and so well did they like their ship that they made it their home.

THE PRINCESSES WHO LIVED IN A KAILYARD

A Tale of Scotland

ONCE upon a time there was a Queen of Scotland. When the King, her husband, died, the kingdom passed to a distant cousin and the Queen and her three daughters had to go to a cottage in a lonely part of the country, for this cousin of theirs was not nearly so good a king as the Queen's husband had been and he did not want the Queen and the three Princesses near the castle, where they could always see how he was ruling and could pass comparisons of him and his predecessor. The new King, accordingly, had packed them off to a distant part of the kingdom, where they had no neighbours at all to talk to and only a little field where they could keep their cow and a patch of ground for their cabbages. But the Queen was a good, thrifty woman, and she said to the Princesses they must

make the best of the little bit of land they had or their fortunes would never be mended. They all set to work, therefore, to carry stones from the moor and build a stout wall round the kailyard so the cow couldn't eat the cabbages.

Whenever the eldest Princess, whose name was Nannie, began to grumble and talk about the fine castle they once lived in, the Queen would say: "Make the best of it when you're getting the worst of it and soon the worst of it turns to the best of it."

"But that nasty, mean, stingy cousin of ours had no right to turn us out this way," cried Nannie, who was a proud little lass and did not mind the hard times so much as the injustice.

"Fortune mends when grumbling ends," said the Queen and that was all Nannie could get out of her.

One morning when Bess, the second Princess, ran out to pull a cabbage, she came tearing back white as paint and shouted out before she got inside the cottage (and you can tell how serious a thing had happened to make her so forget her manners for Princesses never speak except in the gentlest, sweetest voices), "Oh, mother, do come and look at the kailyard. Some one's been there in the night and

They all set to work to carry stones from the moor and build a stout wall around the kailyard.

cut off a whole row of cabbages and taken them away with him."

Well, now there was a to-do and a scuttering to the kailyard, but at the end of it, the Queen hushed the little Princesses who were stamping their feet and carrying on something terrible at the thought of their few cabbages being taken from them.

"Now, now, children," said she, "fortune mends when grumbling ends. The stalks are left and if we wait a while, there's sure to be the sweetest baby cabbages, a dozen on each, maybe. You know how fond you are of those."

"But it's the injustice of it," cried Nannie. "Nobody has any right to steal our cabbages when we have made a wall and kept them from the cow and dug the soil and watered them."

"I won't dig there any more," said Bess, who had a fine Scotch temper and sulked and pouted where Nannie stamped her foot.

You will notice you haven't heard about the third Princess yet. Well, her name was Elspeth and the reason you haven't heard of her is that she never was much for talking, but just went about her business smiling away and doing everything so

cannily it was a pleasure to watch her. She had stayed behind at the kailyard and now she came dancing along the path.

"Oh, mother," said she, "there are such big bootmarks along by the wall in the mud!"

Well, now, they must all run and look, and sure enough there were the most enormous bootmarks, so big that the Queen said at once, "Why, a Giant must have been here."

You might think Nannie and Bess and Elspeth would have been afraid to hear that, but being Princesses, they had been brought up never to be afraid of anything, and Nannie said she should take her milking stool and wrap herself in her mother's plaid and sit up all the next night in the kailyard so that if the Giant came again, she could send him about his business.

So that night when the others went to bed, Nannie marched out with her milking stool and set herself down to watch. The moon was up, and the cabbages glistened as plainly as if it had been day.

She drew her plaid round her and hid every bit of her face except the tiniest part of her eyes to peep out of; then came a dull sort of tramping sound

in the stillness; and over the wall she heard a scuffling and hustling and then there stepped into the kailyard the biggest sort of a Giant. He stooped down and cut off a row of cabbages before Nannie could get her plaid off her mouth; then she cried out: "What are you doing with our cabbages?"

"What business is that of yours?" said the Giant so impolitely that Nannie raged with anger. Think of the injustice of his stealing their cabbages and then asking what business it was of hers!

"They're our cabbages and you put down that sack and go about your business," cried Nannie, putting on her haughtiest air.

Well, what do you think the Giant did!

If he didn't stoop down and pick up Nannie as if she were a cabbage and toss her into the sack on top of them! Then he put the sack over his broad shoulder and went striding off, over the hill and dale.

Dear, dear, but she had an uncomfortable journey and when the Giant marched into his house and threw the sack down on the floor Nannie crawled from the sack so shaken about she hadn't the strength to stamp her foot, even when the Giant told her she must drive his cow to pasture, comb, card,

and spin a bag of wool, and make a great bicker of porridge for his supper against the time when he returned.

It was no use to try to run away, for the Giant could reach out his long arm and pick her up as if she were a fly and so Nannie had to go along behind the cow, with the Giant watching her all morning.

Then she tethered the cow to a patch of grass and came back to see about the wool and the porridge. When she got inside the door, the Giant couldn't see her and so Nannie thought she would make herself a sup of porridge for her dinner. She found a little iron pot, where the Giant kept his salt, and in this she boiled a nice little sup of porridge for herself, and sat down to eat it.

She had just sat down on the floor to have her dinner, when there came a knock. It was a timid little knock, and when she called, "Who's that?" a weak, shivery sort of voice said:

"'Tis a poor traveller, mistress, lost on the moor and wishful for a bite if you can spare one."

"Faith, no," said proud Nannie. "I've little for one and less for two. Be off about your business or the Giant will be after you."

Well, she heard no more of the traveller, and after she had eaten the porridge she piled the peat under the great bicker full of meal and gave it a stir and then she set to work to comb the wool; but the more she combed the more knots came into it, and she grew angrier and angrier, until when the Giant marched in, there was all the bag of wool spoiled and the porridge burnt as black as the pot, for every knot of wool that wouldn't come out, Nannie had tossed into the fire and sent a great blaze under the bicker.

Mercy, but he was angry! He picked up Nannie and took her out into the byre and threw her up into the loft among the hens and told her to stay there, for she was no use at all. And didn't Nannie cry and storm at the injustice of it, when she had been driving his cow and trying to comb his wool all day.

Well, the next night, Bess said she would sit up and watch, so that she could make the Giant give back their sister Nannie, but directly the Giant saw her, before she had a chance to speak, he put her in the very bottom of his sack and piled the cabbages upon her until, if there hadn't been a little hole for

her to breathe through, she would have been suffocated. Exactly the same things happened to her, even to the poor traveller coming and being turned away, for Bess determined to make things as unpleasant as she could for the Giant and every one, and sulked till her face looked as heavy as an underdone pudding. Dear, dear, but the Giant was angry when he got home the next night and found nothing done! He threw her, too, up into the byre with the hens and there she found Nannie. You can imagine how glad they were to see each other. Nannie forgot her temper and Bess forgot her sulks and they kissed and hugged each other and then they ate a little of the meal that had been thrown to the hens and went to sleep cuddled up in their plaids.

When the Giant went to the kailyard the third night, there was the third Princess, Elspeth, perched on the wall, but when she saw him coming, she called out, "Good evening," most politely.

"You're coming along with me," said the Giant, in a terribly gruff voice, and Elspeth said, "I expected to, and that is why I am here."

Seeing she spoke so politely and smiled in such a pleasant way, the Giant had no wish to ill-treat her

and when he had put in the cabbages he set her on the top of them quite comfortably. Then off he went with the sack on his shoulder as before, but Elspeth had her little scissors with her, and she cut a wee little hole in the sack and peeped through and noticed every bit of the way they went so that she would know the road home again. When they got to the Giant's house, Elspeth had sat so quietly she had been no weight or trouble at all, and when the Giant set her down on the floor without a single bump, she stepped out as pretty as a picture.

Then the Giant gave his orders, and she nodded when he said she must drive the cow, and said, yes, she could do that; and when he showed her the bicker full of porridge, she said, yes, she could make good porridge; and when he showed her the bag of wool, she said she never had combed or carded or spun any wool, but she would try her best; then the Giant went off for his snooze in the heather, and Elspeth attended to the cow, and came back and made herself a sup of porridge for her dinner.

Just as she was going to eat it, however, the timid knock sounded and the weak, shivery voice of the

poor traveller was heard outside the door. Instead of staying where she was and calling out, which is no sort of welcome as every one knows, Elspeth set down her little pot and ran to the door. Outside stood the queerest-looking fellow you ever saw. His hair was bright red-gold and it stuck up like a shock of hay on fire, and his thin, white face and bright blue eyes peered out beneath. He was dressed in a kilt of green and silver tartan and had tossed a plaid over his shoulder, so that he was not so poorly clothed, but it was plain he was hungry, for his face was thin as a hatchet and he was rubbing his stomach in the most pitiful way.

Well, he told he had lost his way on the moor, and seeing the smoke, he had come to the Giant's house, and now he begged for a sup of something.

All Elspeth had to give him was her own dinner, but she brought that out to him, and when he had finished, he said he would like to do a service for her and asked if she had any wool she wanted carded.

Elspeth was ready enough to say yes, and out she brought the great bag the Giant had left, and down sat the poor, strange traveller, and in less than

a twinkling, his thin fingers had run through it, and combed it and carded it, and then he told her to fetch out the spinning wheel, and there he sat and spun the wool till it was as white and fine as dandelion down. When he had finished, he jumped out and vanished just as quickly as a dandelion ball when you puff it, and that was the last she saw of him.

When the Giant came in, there was his porridge cooked to perfection, the peat bright and cheerful, the wool finished and Elspeth ready to wait on him. The Giant was so pleased, he told her where her sisters were and said she could set the ladder against the loft and climb up to them. "And if you can teach them to work as well as you have done, I'll let them come down again some day, when their proud hearts are brought low," said the Giant. You can guess how glad Elspeth was to find her sisters again.

In the morning, when Elspeth ran down to attend to the fire and get the Giant's breakfast, she said, "If you please, would you mind carrying a creel of heather to my mother's cottage as there are none of us left to get bedding for the cow?"

Elspeth asked so politely with such a pretty smile, that the Giant could not think of any other answer

but yes, and off he strode with the big basket of heather on his shoulder before he took his daily nap. Elspeth was busy at work all day, and in the evening the Giant again said she might go and sleep with her sisters and maybe he would let them come down some day so that Elspeth might teach them to work as well as she did.

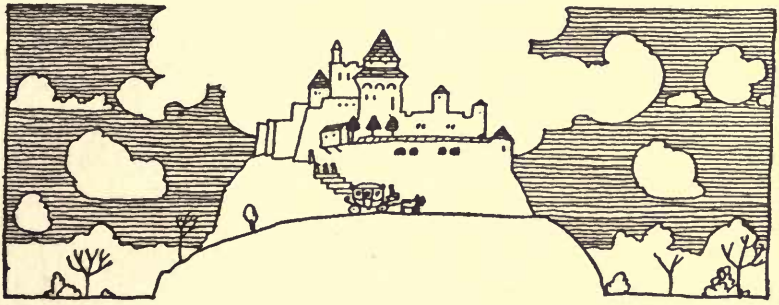
Well, the next morning there was another big creel full of grass lying in the yard and Elspeth again asked the Giant if he would carry it over to her mother, as there was no one left to pull fodder for the cow, and again the Giant agreed and took over the basket.

He was just as pleased with Elspeth when he came back in the evening and said next day her two sisters might come down, for he was going on a journey and would like the house redd up.

"In case I am not down when you start," said Elspeth, "would you very kindly carry this last basket of bog myrtle for my mother to stuff a pillow? I will leave it by the door."

Well, the Giant was going past the kailyard and he agreed to take it. Next morning Elspeth was not down, but there lay the basket, and when he had

set it down inside the kailyard wall and gone about his business, who should creep out but Elspeth, and then didn't she run across the kailyard and into the cottage where her mother and Nannie and Bess were setting breakfast. For of course Nannie and Bess



had been hidden in the baskets of grass and heather which the giant had carried so obligingly.

Just as they were toasting their bannocks and supping their brose, who should come riding up but a fine messenger with a gilded coach, to say their cousin, the King, had become much nicer and had sent for them, so that the Queen could help him to rule the kingdom, and they were all to come at once and live in the castle which had been their own dear home.

And so when the Giant came back that night and found the three Princesses gone and rushed over to

the kailyard to look for them, there was nothing for him, neither the cow, nor a hen, nor a cabbage, for the Queen, with true Scottish thrift, had taken everything away with her.

THE BOYS WHO LEFT TROUBLE BEHIND

A Tale of New Zealand

ONCE upon a time there was a little boy named Tutanekai who lived in New Zealand with his stepfather, his mother, and stepbrothers; his stepfather was as kind to him as if Tutanekai were his own son, but his stepbrothers were strong, overbearing boys who mocked at him because he was gentle and small. They would not play with him at all and one day his stepfather found him crying and asked what was the matter. Tutanekai told him that he had no one to play with, but his stepfather smiled and pointed to the birds overhead and the little animals that frolicked in the wood.

"Why not make friends with these companions here?" said he; and as he turned away, murmured,

"When things seem to trouble you
There's always something you can do."

So Tutanekai began to make friends with the

flowers and animals and birds in the forest and as he was very gentle they soon understood he meant well to them and became his friends. When his stepbrothers boasted of being famous hunters, Tutanekai had no desire to follow their example. He knew where every wild creature lived but he did not wish to kill his friends; he was so much bigger than they were; he would have felt a coward if he used his strength to harm them.

One day when he was in the forest he heard a delightful sound, sweeter than any bird's song, and going in the direction of the music, he came on a big rough boy sitting in a tree playing on a queer-shaped horn. The music was so enchanting that Tutanekai forgot his shyness and ran up to him, crying, "Oh, please show me how to make sounds like those."

"Sorrow was my teacher," said the big boy. "I have been turned out of my tribe and sent into the woods to live alone: so I have made this horn on which I can play. It is terrible to have no one with whom one can speak, the whole day long."

"I will willingly talk to you if you will teach me how to make a horn," said Tutanekai. "I play in

the woods all day and I, too, find the days pass slowly with no one to speak to."

"Have you then been turned out of your tribe?" cried Taki.

"No, but my stepbrothers will not play with me," said Tutanekai. "They say I am too small and gentle for them."

"Why, that is strange," said Taki. "I have been turned out of my tribe because they say I am too big and rough. I may as well confess, for you will surely soon find out, that I have a terrible temper, and directly I am opposed, I feel like the Evil One himself."

"Why, then you have come to the woods for the same reason as I," said Tutanekai, "to leave trouble behind. There is no one here to oppose you and there is no one here to tease me, and so we can be perfectly happy."

"Well, it is surely a good thing to leave trouble behind," said Taki thoughtfully. "There is no reason why I should not be happy if that has happened."

"And will you teach me how to make music?" asked little Tutanekai.

"Why, that I will," said Taki, "and we will go down to the seashore to find a sharp stone with which to carve; you shall have a flute, and then we can play together, I on my horn and you on your flute, each different, and yet making sweet music together."

From that day Tutanekai became great friends with Taki; they played together with the birds and animals and Taki soon found out he had to be gentle with the little creatures or they would not come near him.

At last the two boys built a little house high up in the trees; it was like an elevated balcony where they could sit and play music every evening. Far below they could see the waters of the lake in which were many islands, and as the clear strains of the horn and flute rang out, people in canoes would look up and wonder who it was that was playing so sweetly.

Now from being together so much both Taki and Tutanekai improved greatly; Taki became more gentle and Tutanekai became more sociable. Therefore, when a neighbour gave a great festival, both Taki and Tutanekai were invited, and as they had

each other for company they were very pleased to go. They wove beautiful loincloths of grasses, made necklaces of shells, and stuck flowers in their hair, so that when they came to the party they looked as handsome as anybody. Indeed, Tutanekai's stepbrothers did not look half so well, although they had feather bonnets on their heads and wore whale's teeth and such things which they had gained when hunting.

Taki and Tutanekai walked about together enjoying themselves very much until they saw everybody crowding down to the shore and heard them calling "Hine-Moa, here comes Hine-Moa." They wondered who this Hine-Moa could be and mixing with the crowd, approached the lake in time to see a young girl bringing her canoe to land with incredible swiftness and skill. Far across the lake came the canoes of her companions, but Hine-Moa was on land and halfway up the hillside before they reached the shore. Then the boys heard that this young Hine-Moa was the greatest and richest princess in New Zealand, and although so young, ruled over the powerful tribe that lived across the water on the mainland which the boys could see from their balcony.

Everybody went up to Hine-Moa and complimented her, and Tutanekai's brothers kept close beside her, for they always liked to be with important people. Everybody was asking Hine-Moa to dance with them, but when they all stood up in a great ring, Hine-Moa noticed Taki and Tutanekai. They looked better than any one, with the red flowers in their dark hair instead of the feathers of poor dead birds, and, as they danced, Hine-Moa noticed how kindly and gently they took their partner's hands. She asked Tutanekai's stepbrother who they were and heard a long tale about their foolishness and shyness.

"Instead of hunting and fishing as men should do," said the stepbrother, "they are no better than girls. They sit up in the woods playing their foolish flutes until we are tired of hearing them."

But when she heard this Hine-Moa clapped her hands together and cried, "What? Are those my seabirds whom I hear across the water every morning? Indeed, they are better than girls if they can make beautiful music like that, for there is not a girl in New Zealand who can play the flute half so

sweetly, and I am going at once to ask them to teach me."

Hine-Moa was used to having her own way, and leaving her astonished partner to dance by himself, she ran out of the ring and hastened to where Taki and Tutanekai were standing. She came to them with both her hands held out and cried, "Dear friends, I have come to thank you for your music. The breeze carries the sound across the water when everything is still, and I have long wondered where it came from. Have you your flute and horn with you?"

Now Taki and Tutanekai never went anywhere without them and Hine-Moa persuaded them to teach her how to play; and, finally, the three of them went down to the shore so that she might show them her canoe which she had made and decorated herself. In return, the boys told her of their balcony which they had built with their own hands and she said she would love to come in her canoe some evening and see it.

If Tutanekai's stepbrother had said he and Taki were no better than girls, Taki and Tutanekai thought Hine-Moa was much better than any boy

they had ever known. They had never seen such a beautiful canoe for speed or lightness, and most of all, they admired the way in which she had carved and painted it. When they all departed, Taki and Tutanekai agreed they would blow their flute and horn next evening as loud as they could and would keep on playing after the moon rose so that the sound would guide her, in her canoe, to the spot where they waited for her.

But Hine-Moa's friends had heard from Tutanekai's stepbrothers all about Taki's terrible temper and Tutanekai's timidity and they made up their minds that their beloved Princess should not make friends with boys such as these; and they hauled the canoes out of the water and hid every one of them so that when Hine-Moa went for hers that evening, it was gone. She could hear the sweet music very faintly and knew how disappointed Taki and Tutanekai would be if she did not come; but there was the Lake Rotutua between them; and then she remembered the quaint little rhyme Tutanekai had whispered to her at parting:

"When things seem to trouble you
There's always something you can do."

Now on the shore was a great pile of dry, empty gourds, that her friends had tumbled out of one of the canoes in the hurry of hiding it. As she stood looking across the lake she noticed one of these gourds bobbing about in the current and suddenly it flashed upon her that it might be possible to swim across. She took six large gourds, packed her dress in one, and a towel in the other, and put them on each side of her as floats, and then she went out on to the rocks, and cast herself into the water. She swam for some time until she came to the stump of a sunken tree. She was able to rest on that a few minutes, floating on the current of the lake, supported by the gourds. It was quite dark and she could not have known where Tutanekai's balcony was if the music had not guided her. Presently she saw tiny lights in the trees and she swam on and on, always resting on the gourds, until she climbed up on to the rocks of the island of Mokoia. Just along the shore she saw puffs of steam escaping through the rocks.

Now it had been a long swim and Hine-Moa was young and the waters of the deep lake were cold; so that when she arrived on land she was shivering all

over and felt she could not walk another step. As she stood there dithering and trembling and getting her apron of grasses out of the gourd into which she had put it for safety, she saw the puffs of steam and knew with joy that here was one of the hot springs for which New Zealand is famous. Joyfully she ran towards it and found a natural bathtub hollowed out of the rock with the hot water bubbling up in it. Great rocks hid it from sight and Hine-Moa jumped in to warm her chilled and wearied limbs.

Just at this moment, however, Tutanekai sent Taki with a calabash for a drink of hot water, for Tutanekai had made up his mind he would not stop playing until Hine-Moa arrived. When she heard some one coming Hine-Moa called out in a gruff voice like a man's, "For whom do you fetch that water?"

"It is for Tutanekai," said Taki, so startled he stopped right where he was.

"Tell him to come here at once," said Hine-Moa in a savage growling voice which sounded as if the water itself was speaking. Taki was so frightened that he threw down the calabash and flew back and

told Tutanekai that there was a strange man in the Hot Springs.

"He must have come in a canoe for there is one drawn up on the shore," said Taki. "I nearly tumbled over it. It is so dark one can scarcely see the steam from the Hot Springs. I am sure Hine-Moa will never be able to find her way across."

But Tutanekai had thrown down his flute and was jumping up, crying, "Why, of course it is Hine-Moa herself."

Then both Taki and Tutanekai hastened to the Hot Springs and there, sure enough, was Hine-Moa in her pretty dress, laughing heartily at the trick she had played on Taki.

How glad they were to take her to their little house, and how nimbly Hine-Moa climbed the tree, I need not say; nor how they all enjoyed the supper they had prepared in her honour.

Not till Tutanekai said suddenly, "I wonder if your canoe will be safe down there," did Hine-Moa burst out laughing and told them she had no canoe at all. Then she took them down to see her gourds and described her wonderful swim across the lake.

"Oh, how glad I am we kept on playing," cried Tutanekai.

"Yes, you said we must not let trouble come in front of us and stop our music," said Taki thoughtfully. "You said we must keep on expecting joy, even when I grew weary; I see now that is the way to bring joy, for if we had ceased, Hine-Moa would not have had the music to guide her and then—who knows what might have happened?"

"Ah, Hine-Moa, often and often Taki has said 'Joy would come to us across the lake,'" said Tutanekai. "Now come to my father's house and receive a royal welcome, for the whole tribe must hear of your wonderful exploit and honour you."

Then the boys took Hine-Moa to Tutanekai's house, and, late as it was, his father and stepbrothers called all the neighbours, even Taki's tribe, and all together feasted and rejoiced and honoured Hine-Moa for her brave deed. Thus the boys who left trouble behind, brought joy to all who knew them.

HE WHO ASKS LITTLE RECEIVES MUCH

A Tale of Serbia

ONCE upon a time there were three brothers who had nothing in the world but an old pear-tree, which, when the fruit was ripening, each took in turn to watch, while the others worked.

One day the brother who was watching saw an old man approaching; he looked rosy and jolly and when he caught sight of the rosy pears, he stopped and asked politely if he might dine off the fruit, as he had not broken his fast that day and they were a long distance from any farm or cottage.

"I cannot give you any fruit from my brother's share of the tree, but I will gladly give you some from mine," said the first brother. "I must gather it myself, however, for we have divided the tree into three portions, from branch to branch, and you would not know where my share of the tree begins and ends."

The brother therefore climbed the tree and gathered a good basket of the plumpest and rosiest pears, and brought them down to the old man, who ate them gratefully.

The next day the second brother was watching; the old man again appeared and again came up and asked if he might dine off the fruit, and the second brother answered as the first had done, and climbing the tree brought down a generous basket of the finest fruit, saying, "It is a pleasure to be able to show hospitality, even if one has only a few pears."

On the third day when the third brother was watching, the beggar came up and made the same request, and the third brother made exactly the same answer and gave as good a basket of fruit as the others had done.

"Did your brothers tell you I had been this way before?" said the old man.

"No," said the third brother.

"Nor that they had given me a basket of pears each time I came?" said the old man.

"What are a few pears?" said the third brother, looking very puzzled, and the old man nodded his head as if he were pleased. "Nothing to speak of,"

He climbed the tree and gathered a good basket of the plumpest and rosiest pears.

said he. "It is good not to speak of one's charities or even to remember them."

He then went his way and soon the third brother had forgotten all about him.

Soon after, the crop of pears was gathered and all marvelled at the fine flavour and abundance of the fruit; after the brothers had given great baskets to their masters for whom they worked, there still remained so many that they obtained a good price for them at market, and, for the first time, found themselves with money in their pockets. They took a walk, therefore, beside the river bank to discuss what they should do with it.

But as they were walking along, whom should they see coming up to them but the old man! He still wore his homely dignity and when he approached, they saw at once that he had not come to ask for anything this time. No, indeed; instead he said it was in his power now to do them some little service and he would like to know the desires of their hearts.

"Why," said the first brother, "we have just been saying what we should like to have if only our money would stretch as far. I long for a great fruit

orchard, full of apples and cherries and plums and pears, with grapevines on the slopes of the hill," said he. "Then I would have sheds by the river where we would press out the juice from the grapes and apples and send it away in barrels on rafts I would cut from the forest.

"There would be a great stream of fruit and juice flowing down the river to the towns, and in the winter when the sap is sleeping, I would be busy in the sheds making my rafts and barrels, so that there would be no time wasted through the year. If I had time to spare, and I certainly would have some, I would spend my evenings painting my barrels in bright colours and carving and painting my rafts so that every one would rejoice when they saw my fruit sailing down the river and feel as joyful as if they beheld the fair sight of an orchard, laden with brown, red, and yellow fruit, or saw it in the spring when the blossoms are rosy and the leaves pale green."

The first brother paused quite excited at all the possibilities of his fruit orchard, and the old man smiled very kindly as he turned to the second and asked what his choice would be.

"Give me a great farm with rolling meadows and many sheep," said he. "From their milk I would make butter and cheese in the cool dairies of the farmhouse. I would then be able to use my evenings profitably in carving butter moulds, and my cheese should be white and firm as marble. I would shear my sheep, too, and card and spin and weave the wool and make beautiful cloth and rugs in the winter; and some of the sheepskins should be dressed and made into warm coats, and I would paint the inside of the skin so that the inside of the coat would be as gay as the flowers in the meadows. Everybody would rejoice who got one, and the painted flowers would make the shepherds remember the bright summer and the balmy air, as they tended their flocks in the cold winter nights and days. And all the good wives who spread my butter would fall to thinking of the fragrant flowers on my butter moulds, and the butter would taste as sweet as spring. Then I would have ox-wagons, painted, and carved until they looked like a Tsar's chariots and they should carry my butter and cheese and wool to the cities where men have few flowers and need to remember our rolling, fertile meadows."

The old man again nodded as if he were well pleased, and turning to the third brother asked him for his heart's desire.

"Why, as my brothers talked, I have been thinking they will need a woman, either in the orchard or the farm," said he, "and on the goodness of their wives will depend the success of their ventures as well as the happiness of their homes. I will first make sure of my wife and then let my place in life unfold. So my heart's desire is to marry a true Christian woman."

But now the old man looked rather disturbed and said, "This may sound easy to you, but there are only three true Christian women in the country and two of them are married, while the third is the Tsar's daughter. You surely would not wish to marry her when you have no home to offer her?"

"Yes, indeed," said the third brother heartily. "The money my share of the pears has brought will buy a plot of ground and materials with which I can build a cottage large enough to shelter two."

"But the Tsar's daughter is used to a great palace," said the old man, "and many rooms filled with costly furniture, and many servants to wait on her."

"As there will be little furniture but that which I can make in my spare time of evenings we shall need no servants to take care of it," said the third brother cheerfully. "And if she is a true Christian woman, she will be as happy in a hut as in a palace and prefer to live as others live instead of queening it over every one. Moreover, if she is a true Christian woman, she will be industrious and eager to learn, and we shall make a fine home in time. If she is a true Christian woman she will have patience and if she is not a true Christian woman, she can stay in her palace, for I have no desire to have any one but a true Christian to spend my days with."

"Do you mean to say you have not heard of the beauty of the Tsar's daughter?" said the old man, "nor that princes from all parts of the world are seeking to win her hand?"

"If she is a true Christian woman, she will prefer a man who seeks her for that reason, and not because her father is a Tsar or her face is beautiful," said the third brother, quite undaunted, but rather, indeed, as if he thought his chance was a good one.

"Well," said the old man, "I have come here to-day to give you each your heart's desires. The

orchard shall be yours," he added, turning to the first brother, and to the second, "The farm shall be yours," then to the third, "While as for you, you shall at least lay your request before the Tsar's daughter, for I know you will not be content unless she gives you her heart as well as her hand."

The next day, therefore, the third brother was admitted into the Tsar's palace, and allowed to see the Tsar's daughter, and to every one's surprise, she said the third brother offered her the wish of her heart, and she stepped out of the palace and left her grand clothes, thick with gold and jewels, that separated her from all the simple homely people in the world; and she went happily with the third brother to help him build his cottage, for, said she, "true Christians always help each other, and it is well for a wife to begin as soon as she can, to help her husband." They built the little cottage, therefore, and lived in it, and the third brother worked in the tiny plot of land and grew the simple food they needed.

Some time after, the old man came their way again. The first thing he saw was the first brother's fine orchards, each set out as neat as a nut, with the

trees in orderly rows, and bushes between them, and the vines climbing the hillside. On the river bank were now great sheds and wharves, and a great din of hammering arose, and black boats and rough rafts clustered round the water's edge. But the old man looked in vain for the carven and painted rafts and the gay barrels, for everything was dingy and ugly, as if the first brother thought only of getting as much out of his orchard as quickly as possible and never gave a thought to the people who lived by the river and saw his fleet of rafts and boats go by, laden with the hideous dull barrels. The old man nodded to himself, but this time he nodded sadly, and then he went up to the fine house which stood a little way from the orchard.

There was a woman in charge, dressed in costly silks and ordering her maids about, and when the old man saw her on the porch he went up to her and asked if he might have a drink of grape juice, for it was the time just after harvest.

"Indeed, no," said the woman, "if we were to give to every one who asked, there would be nothing left for us. With everything costing so much, we have little enough for our own use." The beggar took

a good look at her proud, discontented face, and without another word, went away. As he passed by the old pear-tree which stood between the orchard and the farm, he beheld the first brother, now very fat and pompous, standing beneath the tree, and approaching him, he asked if he might have one of the few pears that still clung to the branches.

"No, indeed," said the first brother harshly. "I am keeping those pears to flavour a particular brand of perry, and they certainly will not be wasted on a beggar when I will not even pull them for my own table."

The old man said not a word, but bowed his head and went on to the farm.

Here, too, was evidence of prosperity. Many sheep browsed on the meadows, and the farm buildings were full of the clatter of tin cans and pails, while glancing within the open doors, the old man beheld many servants at work on the butter and cheeses. But he noticed that everything was dumped into the muslin, or thumped into the tubs, without any thought except to get through as quickly as possible. There were no pretty butter

moulds and no gayly painted ox-wagons to be seen anywhere.

Instead, every one looked worried and anxious, and as ugly as the tubs they thrust the butter into, or the boxes in which they packed the cheese. Going a little farther, the old man saw a huge building where wool was stacked, and beheld a stream of hurried, worried people carrying it in bales and throwing it into ugly carts. He shook his head more sadly than before and went up the steps to the farmhouse around which not even a flower grew.

Here he asked if he might have a slice of cheese, but a thin, worried woman, who was evidently mistress, told him to go away. "We have nothing to give to any one," said she, "and scarcely enough for ourselves; the demand for our cheese and butter is so great we scarcely know how to get it to market. It is weeks since I have had as much butter in my kitchen as we need."

The old man gave her a good look and beheld her anxious, pinched expression and dull eyes and without another word, went away. He returned past the old pear-tree, and there he saw the second brother hurrying on his shepherds who were driving sheep.

The old man paused and asked him if he might have a pear, but the second brother said shortly that he had long since sold his share of the tree to his brother, and had no time to listen to beggars, anyway, and on he ran after the shepherds.

Then the old man turned his steps in the direction of the plot of ground whereon the third brother had built his cottage. Such a dear little cottage greeted him, so small it had but a single room, but there was a gay plot of flowers before the windows, vines climbed about the door, and little flowers grew upon the roof and made another flower garden. There was a gay hen-house, painted brightly, and a neat fence so that the chickens should not spoil the flowers, and the windows shone like diamonds. The third brother was spading up the ground, but directly he saw the old man, he called to his wife, and both ran forward to meet him and welcome him.

Then they took him into their little home, and inside it was even prettier than out. With their clever, patient hands they had carved and made good solid furniture that would last many lifetimes, and had painted between the carving, and had embroidered stout cushions and woven rugs and cur-

tains, and you may be sure they had found time to weave gallant patterns thereon, which filled one with joy and courage just to look on them.

They begged the old man to be seated, and then they made haste to prepare a meal for him.

But the old man noticed, though they did not say a word about it, that the flour they took from the bin was not from corn or barley, but poor stuff made from the bark of the trees that grew in the forest. They chatted to him as gaily as if they possessed all that they could desire, however, and mixed and baked the bread and set the table with a cloth of coarse linen embroidered with beautiful lettering and grateful words, each helping the other and each as happy as the other.

And when the table was spread, the third brother ran out and fetched a jug of sparkling water from the spring while the Tsar's daughter drew the bread from the oven. But what was her surprise to find instead of a hard little cake, a fine loaf of beautiful light bread, scenting the kitchen with its fragrance, and as the third brother came back and poured the water from his jug into the wooden beakers, behold it was the best sort of grape juice as red as rubies.

Then did the Tsar's daughter and the third brother cry aloud with joy, saying, "How good God is! We have been enabled to welcome our guest as we would wish."

"You had already welcomed me with the best man has to give," said the old man, "for you have welcomed me with remembrance and gratitude." Then they all enjoyed their meal together and the old man departed, smiling at the wise choice the third brother had made. Nor did he go before he had found out that their corn bin was empty because they had given their beautiful harvest away to those in greater need; and the next day when the Tsar's daughter returned from the forest where she had gone to collect bark, and the third brother returned from the river where he had been to get reeds for a basket, they found their corn bin and flour bin, too, full of the best that they could wish, with this message on the table,

"He who asks little, receives much."

FITNA AND THE COW

A Tale of Persia

ONCE upon a time there was a young prince of Persia named Bahram. He was a gallant impetuous boy, very brave and skilful, and usually tender-hearted; but one day he would be Shah of Persia and he was used to having his own way in all things, and most of the courtiers round him flattered him.

Bahram was very fond of riding and picnicking out of doors and one day he was speeding through the woods with several ministers and companions. He amused himself by shooting with his bow and arrows as he rode, transfixing the fruit on the trees, and bringing now and then a leaf or blossom to the ground, so skilful was his aim. At every fresh achievement, a cry of wonder and admiration would go up from those beside him, which of course encouraged Bahram to perform even more dexterous feats.

Presently they left the wood and came into a pleasant open space where a little river ran between banks of flowers. Gently rising hills stretched away in the distance and a beautiful lilac bush neighboured a rosebush in full bloom. Here Bahram drew up his horse and dismounted and attendants hastened to spread a silken carpet on which he might sit, while others unpacked the provisions and cooled the sherbet in the brook. But glancing round, Bahram perceived his chief friend, Fitna, standing near, looking very grave. Her eyes were fixed on the distant hills, and she did not seem to be aware of Bahram's presence.

Fitna was a young and beautiful slave whom Bahram's parents had placed in attendance on their son because she was so intelligent and sincere. Bahram liked her because she always spoke the truth and had also a thousand interesting stories to tell him, and information about all sorts of curious things. She rode, too, more swiftly than any one at the court except himself, could shoot almost as well as he could, never complained of heat or cold and took any discomfort that happened as hardily as a brave girl should. She looked as beautiful as

the lilac or the rose tree as she stood there and Bahram called her to him, to ask what she was thinking about.

"I was looking at that rock over there," said Fitna, "where Shah Husheng threw the stone at the dragon and set the grass on fire with the sparks that flew from the stone striking the rock."

"What? Is that the place?" said Bahram, much interested.

"Yes, and I was thinking how wonderful it was that he was not afraid when for the first time men saw fire and all his courtiers flew before the strange appearance," said Fitna, taking the seat Bahram indicated on the carpet beside him. "He must have loved his people very much to have stayed there and gone up to the burning grass and discovered the heat could be used for good purposes."

"Did he?" said Bahram, wrinkling up his brows as he tried to remember.

"Why, don't you remember that great Shah Husheng who taught people to cook food and bake bread?" said Fitna. "He also taught them how to weave and make clothes. And when the people from those mountains yonder declared war, instead of

killing them, he turned them into friends and they brought him books made from the skins of beasts, pens from the feathers of birds and ink from the juices of plants; and thus he learned to read and write, and taught all his people to do the same."

"I know and care little about Shah Husheng," said Bahram proudly. "I admire and hope to follow the example of the great Shah Jemshid, who taught his people the use of the armour and the sword and caused his people to wear splendid robes of silk and linen. He built the greatest palace in the world, and never was any king so magnificent or mighty as he was."

"Until he forgot that he was only a man even as other men," said Fitna honestly, "and said that everything that is good—knowledge, peace, and joy —came from him. Then, his palace grew dark and dingy, his people scorned his laws and would not obey them and in the end, drove him into exile."

Bahram said nothing to this, but bit his lip with anger and presently taking up his bow, aimed at the rock across the river, on the top of which grew a tuft of grass. So accurate was his aim, that the tuft was detached from the stone and fell to the ground

transfixed by the arrow. Every one cried aloud with astonishment, and Bahram turned proudly to Fitna and said to her, "Could Shah Husheng have performed so marvellous a feat as that? What have you to say about it?"

"Why, certainly, practice makes perfect," said Fitna calmly, as if Bahram had done only what any man who tried long enough and faithfully enough could do.

Now Bahram's rage grew uncontrollable. Of all people, he wished Fitna to admire and praise and respect him because in his heart he knew she was the wisest of any one around him and also was his most faithful and devoted friend. But to-day she would not admire, and in his pride and vanity he rose up and cried to his attendants, "Take this girl who refuses to honour my high rank and carry her to the mountains and leave her there to perish."

Then he jumped upon his horse and dashed off at such a pace, none could come up with him.

The courtiers were about to seize Fitna roughly when the oldest minister approached, and bidding them stand back, said he himself would see that Fitna's sentence was carried out and bade them

follow the Prince and see that he did himself no mischief in his fury.

Fitna had not said a word; she stood with the tears rolling down her cheeks, proud and calm, for all her grief, for she knew she was in God's hands and even a Shah could not hurt her for doing her duty as a true friend of the young prince she loved and served.

The minister was so struck by her courage and dignity that he took her to a small village at the foot of the mountains and there she promised she would remain hidden from every one so that Bahram might think she had disappeared forever.

The minister arranged to give her a small sum for her needs and then left her and went back to court where he found Prince Bahram already very miserable, but too proud to say openly he had repented of his cruelty.

Fitna did not waste any time in fretting. She obtained a lodging in the one house in the village which had an upper room. This was reached by a staircase of twenty steps going up from the street. Then Fitna walked out and purchased a small calf, not old enough to leave its mother.

She proceeded to mount the stair as easily as if she were carrying a feather.

But Fitna said she would only need the use of it for a few minutes each day, and proceeded to carry the little creature up the twenty steps to her room, and then down again.

This she did every day without fail, summer and winter—in the hottest noon or the coldest weather. Day by day she became a little more accustomed to her strange exercise and day by day the calf became a little larger, so that they kept pace with each other.

This went on for four years.

At the end of that time, it occurred to Bahram who was now King, that he would ride to the furthest domains of his kingdom. Accordingly, he came as far as the village in which Fitna lived and halted on the bank of the river. As they were sitting, enjoying the cool air, to their amazement they beheld a young girl carrying a cow up the village street. She stopped at the house immediately opposite them and proceeded to mount the stair, as gracefully and easily as if she had been carrying a feather instead of a full-grown cow.

The young King was so amazed he sent an attendant instantly to ask the young girl to come

and speak to him so that he might compliment her on her wondrous feat. But he returned with the answer that the young girl would be pleased to give the King any information he required if he would do her the honour of coming to her house.

This made the King even more curious and with his faithful minister, the very one who had taken Fitna to the village and who had a shrewd suspicion that the young girl was Fitna, Bahram hurried across the river. Then he stationed the minister at the foot of the stair and ran up to the room of this mysterious person who could carry a cow up and down twenty stairs.

He found Fitna closely veiled, as was the custom of Persian girls when meeting a stranger, and he at once expressed his great admiration for her skill and strength and said it was the most remarkable exhibition of dexterity he ever had witnessed.

But the mysterious young girl merely shook her head at his praises and said quietly that none were due. She had done nothing remarkable at all. Then, lifting her veil, Fitna looked him straight in the eyes and said: "Practice makes perfect. I merely did a simple thing a great many times so

that you could see for yourself there is nothing to be proud of in that sort of achievement, although ignorant people, not knowing how the skill is obtained, may marvel."

Naturally Bahram was overjoyed to see his friend again, but he was still more touched to think she had been practising all these years, with such great patience, just to teach him not to be conceited. Looking round the simple room, he saw the walls were covered with beautiful embroidered hangings on which Fitna had worked the scene where Shah Husheng struck the rock with his stone, and brought forth fire. There was the lilac and there was the rose tree underneath which they had rested that day when he had sentenced Fitna to perish in the mountains. But instead of fretting at his injustice and unkindness, or of harbouring bitter thoughts in her mind against him, she had patiently set to work to prove what could be accomplished by faithful labour.

" Fitna," said he, " you have told me many stories, now I will tell you the legend of the Caliph and the pearls. Once when a camel of the Caliph's train tripped in a narrow street, a casketful of pearls fell

and the jewels rolled over the road. The Caliph told his attendants they might pick up the pearls for themselves and all hastened to gather as many as they could. But the Caliph noticed one stayed beside him and did not attempt to seize so much as a single pearl. 'Do you not value my gift?' said the Caliph.

"'Sir,' said the attendant, 'my duty is to guard my master faithfully and I receive quite sufficient reward in doing that.'

"Is it to be wondered at that the Caliph saw, that among all his attendants, one was a jewel beyond all other jewels? You, Fitna, have proved that you care nothing for my gifts, your desire is to guard me from my own follies. I see your merit, and beg you to return to court and help me to rule my kingdom wisely and justly, without pride or vanity, so that I shall not suffer the fate of Shah Jemshid."

With these words, Bahram led Fitna down the stairs on which he had seen her carrying the cow, and presented her to the minister and all the courtiers, as his most faithful friend.

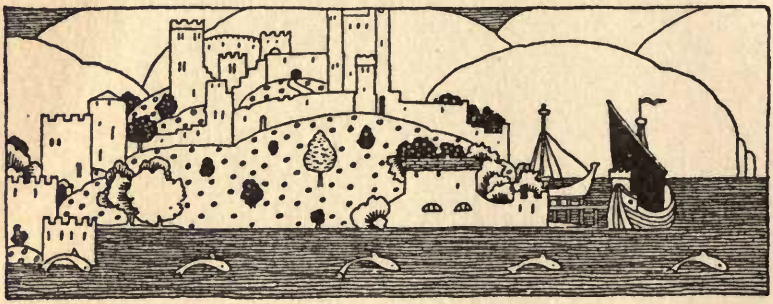
THE CHESS PLAYERS

A Tale of Wales

ONCE upon a time there was a proud grand Emperor who lived in Rome. He was so proud, he never lifted his hand to do a thing for himself. His cloak was buttoned and brooched, and his boots were laced and his shirt was slipped over his head by his servants, and they were no less than Kings, so you can tell how grand he was. One day he called these thirty-two Kings who were his servants, and said they would go out hunting, and so off they started on their prancing horses. You may be sure the Emperor's horse pranced twice as high as any one else's, but he was a good rider for all he was so helpless with his hands, and rode at their head all gleaming in gold and silver, looking as handsome as a picture.

The day was very hot and they turned into a cool valley where a river rushed along, tumbling

from the mountains. But even here the sun beat down and at last the Emperor began to feel so sleepy, he told every one to stop and said he would lie down and have a little nap. Being Emperor, he was used to doing anything he pleased any minute, and down he jumped, and these thirty-two servants



A fine harbour with castles and towers.

who were Kings, laid a golden shield under the Emperor's head for a pillow, and they all stood round him and held their shields over his head to make a shade.

Soon the Emperor's eyes were shut and he was dreaming, and because the river sounded so loud and noisy now that he was on the ground with his ear close to it, it kept on sounding through his dream. He dreamed he was following it till he came to the

mountains and then he went straight over until he stood in a fair, broad land. The river was flowing through it and the Emperor followed and presently it reached the sea and there was a fine harbour with castles and towers, and a great gilt ship lying against the quay. Then the Emperor dreamed he walked aboard and immediately the ship sailed across the sea until it reached a land full of mountains and out he got and went straight across this land till he came to the end of it and there was the sea again and an island facing him. By the shore was a harbour with a big castle, and the Emperor dreamed he went up to this castle and found the hall door wide open, so that he walked straight in and found himself in an enormous hall with a ceiling of gold, walls set with jewels, and doors of gold beaten and hammered into patterns. There were golden benches with embroidered cushions, and silver tables, and opposite him sat two boys playing chess. They were dressed in jet black satin which contrasted with their golden hair bound with chaplets of golden leaves and flowers made from bright jewels.

They were pale, clever, beautiful lads with long

white fingers that touched everything they handled firmly and yet very delicately, and they played with golden chessmen on a silver board. Directly the Emperor saw these two lads he had a strange feeling that some day he would be beholden to them.

But there were other people in the hall. A little way off sat their father with snow-white hair and a kind noble look. He sat in an ivory chair with two eagles carved on it, filled in with ruddy gold; and he held a gold rule and steel file and was carving out the golden chessmen the boys played with. Beside him sat a slip of a girl, even more finely dressed than any of them; she wore a vest of white satin and a surcoat of gold tissue and round her golden hair was a chaplet of gold set with flashing jewels. She was as busy as the rest for her fingers were sending her needle in and out of her embroidery frame.

The Emperor had never seen grand people sitting contentedly, making things with their hands. His notion of grand people was that they never lifted a finger to do a thing for themselves and the sight of this beautiful happy family quite upset and astonished him. He liked the looks of them ever so much,

They played with golden chessmen on a silver board.

but beside them, he felt so stiff and clumsy and useless, he didn't know what to say to them. Just then the girl lifted her head and looked at him and there she had the kindest smile you ever saw; and he started to go forward to them all. But as he did so, he heard a sound as if all the dogs in the castle were barking and horses neighing and stamping and shields clattering, and he opened his eyes and found he was in the valley which led to Rome, with the river rushing by him, and the Kings who were his servants still standing round him, first on one leg and then on the other, holding up the heavy shields and letting them clatter a bit against each other, maybe, because the Emperor had been sleeping so long, every one was wishful for a move.

Yet there was the Emperor, in his own empire of Rome, and no strange castle or maiden or chess-players to be seen.

He rose up then, but he would take no food, and he rode back with no pride in him and let his horse trot as quietly as if it had been behind a cart. When he got up to his rooms he sent his servants the Kings to have some dinner, and unbrooched his cloak and took off his boots and his toga and put

them away himself. He kept on remembering those lads in his dream, he knew they would not let any one fuss round them, treating them like babies. They could do anything they cared to, and make anything they wished, and everything they used or made or touched was beautiful. While as for the tidiness of their castle, it was beyond belief. The Emperor became so miserable, he just took to sitting by himself and had no more interest in dressing up in togas that looked no better than sheets, and prancing about and ordering the Kings around; he paid no attention to his subjects either, and when people sent in petitions for this favour or that, the Emperor let them lie on his table, and sat there saying to himself, " What a useless, wretched, proud, lonely Emperor I am. Oh, that I had those beautiful clever people in my dream for friends so that they could teach me to use my hands and make gold chessmen too."

One day the head servant, who was King of the Romans, plucked up his courage and marched up to the Emperor and told him that every one in the Roman Empire was saying hard things about the Emperor because he wasn't paying any attention to

any one or being any sort of an Emperor at all; and so then the Emperor told him his dream.

Well, the head servant who was King of the Romans, thought it was a most remarkable dream and advised the Emperor to send for all the Wise Men in the empire, and ask if there was anything that could be done; and in they came. The Emperor took heart when he saw them with their white beards and sharp eyes, looking as wise as wise and he told them the dream he had dreamed that day when he lay by the side of the river.

The Wise Men whispered together a bit, as it isn't wise to answer too quickly, and then said the Emperor had better send out messengers to search the whole world and see if they could find any people like those he had dreamed about. They were to go for three years at least and come back every year and tell him. "And then," said the Wise Men, "you will always be in hopes you will have good news at the end of the year."

The King of the Romans and the Emperor thought this a very good plan, for the Emperor was certain there must be some people like that or he could never have dreamed about them in such a

natural way. So off the messengers went. Every man had a sleeve tied to his cap in the front of it so that every one who saw them coming would know they were peaceful and had not come out to conquer, or steal anything (which is much the same thing as conquering).

Well, the messengers searched everywhere round Rome for a whole year but all the grand people they met were being waited on by servants and were as useless as pigs, and they had to come back and tell the Emperor that when folks were rich and grand, they always seemed to become helpless.

The Emperor pulled such a long face when he heard this bad news, however, that the King of the Romans who was head servant, said why shouldn't the messengers go with the Emperor to the place where the Emperor had dreamed his dream, and then the Emperor could tell them exactly the way he had taken in the dream.

Every one went off, therefore, to the river, and when the Emperor got there, he told them how he had followed the river to the west, and gone over the mountains and on with the river to the sea, and all the messengers threw their caps in the air

for joy because now they had something to go on, and they started for the second time.

They crossed the mountains, and found the river flowing through a land such as the Emperor had described, and continuing, they discovered the sea and the ship and they boarded it even as the Emperor had done in his dream and sailed to the land he had dreamed of, and found it was the island of Britain. They crossed it and came to the mountain of Snowdon and beyond that was the harbour and sea and the little Island of Anglesey perking out of it and a fine big castle on the shore. You can guess how pleased the messengers were when they arrived and found the hall door open and the boys playing chess and the old man making chessmen and the maiden embroidering, busy and happy and beautiful as the Emperor had dreamed.

They knelt down respectfully at once and said, "All hail, you are to come with us instantly to Rome where the noble Emperor our master waits for you, and you, oh, maiden, are to be Empress of Rome, for the Emperor desires to become one of the family, and for that end, he will graciously marry you."

But the maiden had something to say to that.

Up went her chin as she said, " Thank you for the kind offer, but if the Emperor of Rome wants to know us, he can come to our door like any other visitor. We ourselves are much too busy to go visiting, and especially at a stranger's bidding. Where is Rome, for that matter? I never heard of the place."

It wasn't the words so much as the way she spoke them, that made the messengers see at once that here was no maiden such as they knew at Rome, but some one as independent and more so than the Emperor too. She spoke, indeed, with such fire, that her father had to rise and say, " Peace, Helen, these men have come from a long distance and the first thing we have to do is to set the table and offer them a drink and bite and then we can hear about this Rome they talk of."

So the maiden made haste to do her father's bidding and brought a fine pasty and a better cake and a mighty flagon of cider out of a cupboard in the wall, and the boys hastened to lay a beautiful embroidered cloth on the table, with a garland of flowers worked on it so gay and pretty, wreathing about with spaces for the plates; and then they

offered fringed napkins which they had woven, and golden goblets which they had made, and a bowl of rich fruit and sweetmeats to top off with, as if the messengers had been the Emperor himself. He could have fared, and would have fared no better, for this clever beautiful family never made any difference in their way of welcoming people.

After they had eaten and drunk and made compliments about how nice everything was, the messengers explained about the Emperor's dream, and the clever family told them to go back to Rome and tell him they were too fond of Britain to leave it, but if he cared to visit him they would be as pleased to see the Emperor as any other guest.

Maybe the old man put a bit extra dignity into his voice and the maid, whose name was Helen, certainly stuck up her chin again, for they did not particularly relish being sent for as if they were slaves and told they were to take a perfect stranger into their family. They lived as they pleased, could make anything they had a mind to, and why should they want to go to Rome and marry an Emperor?

So the messengers went back to Rome. How glad the Emperor was to hear his family existed. Flags

flew from the city walls, every school had a holiday, the Emperor danced about the room in his joy, and so did the King of the Romans.

Of course the Emperor set off for Britain, and called his thirty-two Kings together and his army and told them to polish their shields and helmets and stick feathers into their caps, instead of sleeves, for now they were all going over to conquer Britain. It had never occurred to him to go to a place without conquering it.

So they went to Britain and directly the Emperor landed, he started conquering it, and the people left their homes and fled to the mountains and the mighty Roman army marched along, thinking they looked very handsome and that they were filling the people with awe and wonder, and the Emperor pranced at their head, so eager to reach this clever family he could not stop for meat or drink. Then they arrived at the castle, and the Emperor puffed out his chest and tried to look as splendid as he could, and jumped off his horse with a great clatter and marched in with his swinging cloak. But when he saw his clever, beautiful family sitting there, going about their business so quietly, the pride in him

seemed to melt and run out of his boots and he knelt down at the old man's feet even as the messengers had done and said he had dreamed of them but now he had come, they were better than his dream, and was there anything he could do to get them to be friends with him. He admired everything so much and begged so hard to be one of the family, that Helen said yes. Then there was great rejoicings and the old man said he would teach the Emperor how to make chessmen, and the boys said they would teach him to play, for chess made one think deep and wisely, and Helen said she would teach him to embroider and lose some of the clumsiness from his fingers.

The Emperor stayed with the family, therefore, but he soon found that they did not like him any the better or think him any more splendid and noble for having conquered Britain. Instead, they said it was a foolish wicked thing to do; Britain belonged to the British and conquering it was no better than stealing, and Helen told the Emperor he must give it back at once to her father, from shore to shore, or she would never be Empress of Rome. And then Helen told him if he were going to stay in Britain,

he must do things for the good of the country, as a visitor; and it would be good to build some more big castles like theirs; that is how the castles of Arvon and Caerlleon and Caermarthen came to be built.

Then Helen thought it would be fine to have good roads running from one castle to the other, and the men of Britain built them for her and called them the roads of Helen Luddawc, for they would never have built them at a stranger's bidding, even if he were Emperor of Rome.

What with building the castles and learning the use of his hands, the Emperor was so busy that seven years slipped away like no time, until a letter came saying, a new Emperor had taken his place and he was no longer Emperor of Rome, and moreover, this new Emperor sent an insulting message telling him not to dare to show his face in Rome again.

Now the Emperor and Helen had a great plan that she was to teach the Romans to be clever with their hands and not need servants and slaves to make and do everything for them; and the Emperor saw he must go straight back to Rome if he wanted to stay Emperor and help the Romans to be wiser people.

He went back at once, therefore, and Helen went

with him, for now that the Emperor was in trouble, of course Helen and her family stayed his friends, and wished to help him.

When they came to Rome, the gates were shut and the walls defended, and the Emperor and Helen and the army had to sit down before the city and besiege it, for no one would let them in.

They stayed there for a whole year, trying to knock down the walls, in vain.

But one day whom should they see marching over the plain but a little army; every man was beautifully dressed and they carried wonderfully beautiful standards which put joy and courage into the hearts of all who looked at them. And how they were singing! A band of angels might have been arriving. There were Helen's brothers, the chess players, come over with some of their men from Britain, to help Helen and the Emperor.

But instead of helping to fight, Helen's brothers sat back with their followers, and rested from their journey and watched the way the Emperor's army fought.

They soon saw the guns and swords and arrows were no use at all, for the more stones the Emperor's

army threw, the angrier the people inside became, and the more determined not to let the army in; so at last Helen's brothers said one to the other, "The Emperor has learned the use of his hands, maybe, but he hasn't yet learned to use his brains. We can get into the city more expertly than this."

That day they measured the height of the walls by their shadow, and then they sent their men to the woods for straight young trees, and then they took their rule and measured off ladders, the exact height of the walls, one for every four men.

Now at midday each day, the Emperors went to dinner, inside and outside the city, and so did all the armies and the battle stopped. But the Welshmen rose early and ate their breakfast and then when every one went to dinner the brothers took their ladders and set them against the walls in a quiet spot and their followers climbed up and entered the city.

They drew up their ladders after them, and no one had the least idea where they had gone.

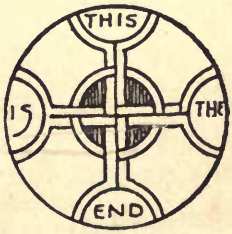
Presently the Emperor said to Helen he wondered her brothers didn't help him.

"You go and ask my brothers to give you your

city," said Helen, "for they are the wisest men in the world."

So the Emperor went over to ask their help, and the brothers led him to the gates of Rome, which immediately flew open and there was every one with the Welshmen ready to welcome the Emperor back. For the Welshmen had so charmed the Romans with their singing and their clever ways of doing things, the Romans were ready enough to welcome Helen and the Emperor and learn how to make use of their hands.

When the Emperor thanked Helen's brothers, they laughed and said climbing a wall was better than knocking it down, and he would know that, if he had ever taken the trouble to build one and found what a work it was!



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